

THE SATURDAY REVIEW

No. 3719. Vol. 143.

5 February 1927

REGISTERED AS
A NEWSPAPER

6d.

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SUBSCRIPTION RATES.—The subscription to the SATURDAY REVIEW is 30s. per annum, post free. Cheques should be sent to the publisher at the above address. The paper is despatched in time to reach subscribers by the first post every Saturday.

NOTES OF THE WEEK

TUESDAY last was an important day in the history of Europe's recovery from the war, for it marked the transfer of the control of Germany's armaments from the Inter-Allied Commission and the Conference of Ambassadors to the League of Nations. At one time there were Inter-Allied officers at work in almost every town in Germany, and although the staff of the Inter-Allied Control Commission has been steadily dwindling, the presence of these foreign officers, however tactful they might be, was always a prevarication to German Nationalism. Under the new League system there is no permanent organization in Germany at all. But, as a Commission of Control can never effectively prevent a country from arming, there is no reason to anticipate that the new system, whereby a Commission of Investigation, under a French President, can only be sent to Germany if the League Council is convinced that the Germans are making serious military preparations, will be less effective than the more partial, more provocative and more costly system of Inter-Allied Military Control.

The German Nationalists do not seem to have come too well out of the political crisis. The new Coalition Cabinet has a bare majority in the Reichstag, and the Nationalists, in their desire for office, have so completely forgotten their own dislike, not only of a conciliatory foreign policy, but also of the Republic, that they must seriously have weakened their influence in the country. It is significant and encouraging that President Hindenburg vetoed the appointment of Dr. Graef, whose loyalty to the Republic was more than questionable. At least two of the Nationalist Ministers are nearly as extreme in their views as Dr. Graef, and the new Minister of Justice will not increase public confidence in a department which is already in such ill-repute. But, as a result of the crisis, Republican feeling in other parties has grown more pronounced, and the Nationalists will be so carefully watched that, while they remain in the Cabinet, the Republic may well be stronger than it has ever been before.

"Government," said an American President, "is always crisis." Mr. Baldwin's Government, if it at all realizes its position, would not dissent from the aphorism. The Session which it enters

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upon next week, midway in its life, is bound to be of decisive consequence. There is little or nothing as yet in the ministerial record that pulls any electioneering weight. The silk duty and the betting tax and the electricity scheme—all good things in their way—are not the sort of achievements that sweep the country. From the coal strike the Government has not emerged with any increase of either strength or public confidence; and the prosperity which the nation used to regard as almost synonymous with a Conservative tenure of office, and the quiet time which it was definitely promised, are both alike to seek. The Prime Minister is still regarded by people at large with trust and even affection, but the feeling towards his Government is tepid, and the foreign and financial embarrassments of the State do not tend to exhilarate it.

With the prospects of the coming Session we deal in a leading article. This is the Government's critical year. So far as the reform of trade union law is concerned the Government are right to tread warily. In these columns we have repeatedly urged the necessity for caution, and we believe that the views of the Prime Minister—which have always been all for moderation—will now prevail over those of his less discriminating colleagues. The reform of trade union law as some politicians and publicists seem to envisage it is the shortest cut to electoral disaster that has come Mr. Baldwin's way since he was led astray into the Tariff Reform bog three and a half years ago; as he himself envisages it, much good may be effected. But at the best any measure of this kind must run the risk of prejudicing the national campaign for industrial peace of which Mr. Baldwin has made himself the champion; at the worst, it may lay all his efforts in the dust precisely at the moment when they stand a chance of beginning to bear fruit. As for that other contentious and equally dangerous subject down for discussion—reform of the House of Lords—the Government will be well advised to forget it. "Let sleeping Lords lie" is the right motto.

The dismissal of Sir Francis Aglen by the Peking Government may quite easily lead to the collapse of the elaborate Chinese Customs administration. We deal elsewhere with the Chinese situation as a whole, but a word of sympathy with the ex-Inspector-General may not be out of place here. Sir Francis has carried out his task of administration with a rare impartiality in exceptionally difficult circumstances, and one is forced to conclude that General Chang Tso-lin has called for his dismissal only because he has done his duty too well. The Northern War Lord is disgruntled because the officials of the Chinese Customs Service refuse to look upon themselves merely as providers of money for rival generals. It is difficult to see what steps can now be taken to ensure the impartial collection of customs, upon the revenue of which most important international loans depend. General Chang Tso-lin should remember that the disorganization of the Customs

Service, while it would damage foreign countries, would lead to the complete destruction of Chinese credit abroad.

Inevitably the breakdown of negotiations in Hankow has encouraged certain people in this country to renew their campaign in favour of a complete breach with Moscow. Our trade with Russia is growing steadily and, despite the undoubted fact that one of the main ambitions of Bolshevism is to annoy Great Britain, the Government hitherto has very wisely refused to be stampeded into action which would do us no good politically and great harm financially. We could ill afford to increase our debit export balance by cutting off the Russian market, and does anybody seriously suppose that expulsion from England of Bolshevik officials would lessen the efforts of General Borodin and his colleagues to stir up trouble for us in Southern China? We sympathize with British creditors who have lost money in Russia, but the whole policy of the country cannot be hampered by vain efforts to restore to them every penny they have lent.

Defections from the Liberal ranks are apparently not yet complete. In Captain Wedgwood Benn, who is going over to Labour, Liberalism has lost a bonny fighter and an excellent House of Commons man. Or perhaps it would be more accurate to say that the Liberals—not Liberalism—have lost him, for though Captain Benn has changed his party he has not changed his mind; he will no doubt continue to hold the same views as heretofore, and his arrival on the Socialist benches will add further powerful impetus to the steady Liberalization of Labour thought—for which the country may be thankful. Captain Wedgwood Benn's defection is due to his uncompromising hostility to the leadership of Mr. Lloyd George, and his method of expressing that hostility seems to us at once more virile and more logical than that adopted by the new Liberal Council. With him it is "come in" or "get out." Lord Lincolnshire admirably expressed this point of view in his letter to Mr. Vivian Phillips declining to join the new Council on the ground that it is a basic Liberal principle to abide by the will of the majority.

The terms of Lord Gorell's Bill for the protection of authors against proceedings for libel, in cases where it can be proved that there was no intention of libelling anyone, seem so eminently reasonable that it is difficult to believe that it will encounter serious opposition. All writers have not Dickens's facility in inventing likely-looking yet non-existent names, and an author's ever-present fear that he may have christened his villain with the same name as that of some irascible and litigious individual in Glasgow is a nightmare that ought to be removed from his life. The terms of the Bill do not prevent such actions from being brought; but they propose a system of insurance which will save the author's pocket in frivolous cases, without preventing cases of genuine injury from finding their remedy at

law. Its general effect will be to reduce the number of such actions; but it will not operate to suppress a single genuine complaint.

Neither of the principal parties concerned in the 'Whispering Gallery' case came out of it covered with credit. Sympathy must be entirely reserved for the chief victim, Sir Rennell Rodd. The other victim was the general public, which by now is used to being victimized, whether by writers, advertisers, or trade unions. The question, as the Chairman said in his summing-up, is whether anyone who bought the book could hope to succeed in an action at law to recover his money, and the answer, evidently, is that he could not. The law needs tightening up. Every day the public is being sold things under false pretences, actual or implied: on this occasion it was a book; more often it is a patent medicine. The widespread disgust which this law-suit has produced will probably spare us from "whispering galleries" for a year or two. We wish we could hope as much for the patent medicines.

The dovecotes of the Drama have been fluttered during the week by much discussion on the battle between the Cinema and the Stage. Mr. Basil Dean finds the Theatre a sinking patient, and having administered the last rites has packed his bag and departed for the film-studios. Which, of course, explains a good deal. There is little doubt that in the Provinces the competition of the cinema is making increasing inroads on the theatre, but there are few signs of it in London: four new theatres are to be built on the Aldwych site—surely not so bad for a dying concern? Mr. Lewis Casson struck the nail on the head when he said that the stage must concentrate on what the films cannot do. The days of 'The Whip' are gone from the stage for ever: that sort of thing can be done so much better at Hollywood. The tendency in the theatre must now be away from representational realism. In the clash of sword on sword the film has usurped the throne; but in the clash of minds the Drama need never fear a challenge.

With the object of determining what the public really wants on the wireless, the *Daily Mail* has decided to inaugurate a Ballot on the lines of those recently run to benefit the Hospitals. The idea is a good one, but we are doubtful whether the particular plan adopted will achieve the desired result. Roughly, the scheme is this: the *Daily Mail* is to publish a set of suggested items for a broadcasting programme and the public is to be invited to mark these in order of popularity—the prizes to go to those who most nearly forecast the choice of the majority. But in doing this, competitors intent on gaining reward will be swayed not, surely, by their own preferences but by what they gauge to be the preferences of their fellow competitors. True, they are also to be invited to indicate separately their own "first choice," which will to some extent mitigate the trouble. But no indication will be forthcoming of how they would place the remaining items—there are to be sixteen in all—so that we shall not know much more than

we did before about the public taste in these matters. If it will help the B.B.C. to find out what listeners like, why do they not organize their own ballot?

Most rumours of Monarchist restorations in Central Europe can be dismissed as the work of propagandists in neighbouring countries, but it is difficult to believe that Count Bethlen is sincere when he insists that there will be no King on the Hungarian throne for at least another five years. Despite the intense hatred which the Treaty of Trianon aroused between Hungarians and Rumanians, there is quite a distinct movement in favour of a *rapprochement* between Bucharest and Budapest. The Rumanian Government is at last beginning to realize that it has far more territory than it can well cope with, and an agreement which satisfied Hungarians in Transylvania would enable Bucharest to concentrate more energy on the defeat of Bolshevik efforts to win back Bessarabia. A few months ago Prince Carol was to become the King of a new Dual Monarchy. Now it is a marriage between the Archduke Albrecht of Hungary and Princess Ileana of Rumania which is to bring the two countries together. All things are possible, even this union of two hostile States.

The "Clumber" Van Dyck is to go to the United States. It is customary to lament the passing of European works of art to America but we think the ululation can be overdone. In one way, indeed, it may prove a blessing, for since the state of mind of the millionaires who sway the world is a matter of international importance, the more masterpieces that cross the Atlantic the better for the world. Old Masters do not die when they go West; rather, they set out upon an embassy. A picture is not changed by residence in America; what we hope is that it may change the millionaire. Hanging in the gallery at Baltimore it may do more to explain Europe and European culture to the great American people than any number of newspaper articles or personally conducted tours.

An advertiser has been fined in Wales for disfiguring the scenery with an ugly hoarding, and it is safe to say that nowhere will the sentence be more popular than in advertising circles. Advertising, it is often forgotten, is only one branch of the art of selling things. It cares not a jot for scenery, but it does care for its own interests. The huckster who shouts so loudly in the market-place that the police have to move him on, obviously makes things harder for his fellow salesmen. It is the same with the man who disfigures the countryside. By making himself a nuisance he harms his own business in the end. What is surprising is that British advertisers have not themselves got together, somewhat on the lines of the American "Truth in Advertising" movement, to reform their business from within. In America it was the supply of truth that was running short—till the movement saved it. In this little country it is the precious remains of our scenery that the public is beginning to worry about.

A CRITICAL SESSION

PARLIAMENT next week will begin a new Session which will decide the reputation of the Government, and (it may well be) its success or failure at the next General Election. Up to now the Government has avoided serious mistakes, but on the other hand it has failed to acquire or assert any marked individuality of its own; its reputation has gone up and down like mercury, and apart from a certain common-sense moderation and humanity with which everyone credits it, its strength has been drawn more from the weakness and folly of its opponents than from its own positive achievement. There is a chance in the coming Session of really constructive work. Finance, the trade unions, and it is to be feared China too, are likely to be the main work of the Session. China we discuss elsewhere. At the best it may distract the concentration of Parliament; at the worst it may, like the strikes of last year, swallow up all other subjects. But the Government cannot stand another dull or inconclusive Session like the last. It should in its third year give a clear lead to thought and begin to shape its coming appeal to the electors. The Government will, therefore, if it is wise, reduce its legislative programme to the minimum, for a multitude of small Bills pleases few outside the departments interested and does little or no service to the country. The two subjects on which the country is still keen, as it was when it elected the Conservatives to power, are finance and industrial peace. On these subjects the Government would do well to concentrate in the coming Session, for on both of them it has still to give a clear lead to the country.

Mr. Churchill, most unlucky of Chancellors, may have to face a serious deficit in this financial year, but the worst effects of the coal stoppage will be felt in the revenue of next year. If affairs in China take a turn for the worse, his Budget this Session may be the most critical for a generation. We are not by any means at the end of our financial resources. The Sinking Fund can always be raided, and his ingenuity will be equal to devising small new taxes which will help to tide over difficulties. But these will only be temporary palliatives, and the hopes which before the strikes of last year we were beginning to indulge of remission of taxation are becoming very remote. We shall be lucky to avoid an increase in direct taxation. In such a situation there are two logical attitudes. We may say, as some do, that high taxation is not an evil, because the money comes back to the country and stimulates the home trade; that industry has adapted itself to the new conditions and individuals adjusted their budgets to the reduced scale of living which high taxation makes necessary, and that our chief financial interest is not to reduce taxation but to make sure that the money is spent on objects that will raise the standard of life for the many.

That is the view of all Labour men and of many Liberals. The orthodox Conservative view is that taxation is at a height that increases the costs of production and impairs our power to compete abroad, that with taxation at its present level we have no reserves of strength with which

to meet a national emergency, and that reduction of taxation is necessary both for national safety and for the preservation of initiative and enterprise. Which of these two views does the Government really take? If the first, it should say so frankly and cease to preach an economy which it either cannot or will not practice itself. If the second, it has to admit complete failure to satisfy what on this view it regards as a supreme national need. This plain issue has been blurred up to now by temporary expedients and the plea of exceptional temporary difficulties; but one horn of the dilemma must be grasped. Either we take the view that an annual revenue of 800 millions from taxation of one sort or another is no more than the country can afford and is doing it no harm, in which case we had better drop all hope of reducing taxation and confine our efforts to preventing an increase; or, if we honestly believe that the country is being injured by high taxation, we must act as though we thought that the problem were really serious—a thing that neither the Commons nor the Government has yet done.

Probably a third of the time consumed last Session was taken up with finance, and in the whole course of debate we do not remember a single practical suggestion of importance for the economy of national finance. On the other hand, there was a steady rain of suggestions from beginning to end of the Session on how more money might advantageously be spent. The House of Commons has completely forgotten its primary function of watching over the public money and has instead given itself over to one or other of many projects, alike in this that they all cost money, for making a heaven upon earth. And yet it professes to be astonished that the Chancellor of the Exchequer has made such poor progress in his fight with the spending departments. Another Session wasted in the futilities of financial debates as they are at present conducted must greatly damage the reputation of the House and of the Conservative Party, to which the country looks as the only hope of relief from its present burdens.

Purely administrative economies can bring no sensible relief, and at best will only check the natural tendency of expenditure to go up. If the Conservative Party really believes that the present taxation is injurious to trade, and if administrative economies are at best only the evaporation of the ocean which keeps it from overflowing with the increase brought by the rain and by the rivers, there are clearly only two possible ways in which the strain can be relieved. The revenue of the State can be increased from other sources than those of taxation—a suggestion that involves big questions of principle and immense schemes of reconstruction. And the incidence of taxation can be altered by making it bear more lightly on the productive and heavy industries, as distinguished from the luxury and distributing trades which are comparatively more prosperous. Incidentally, it might be worth while to make great changes in the methods of collecting income-tax. As at present administered, with its system of allowing arrears to accumulate from past years owing to the slowness in tabling disputes and the practice of constantly re-opening past accounts, the income-tax is breeding, especially for the middle and professional classes, a *covée far harsher than*

that which helped to make the French Revolution. The ideal is to collect all income-tax at the source. It should be deducted from wages and salaries, and paid by the employer. If it were, the tax would be less felt by the payer and would probably be more remunerative, while the steady stream of revenue from this source would save the Government a great amount of interest on Treasury bills and floating debt. Perhaps the House of Commons will spare us this Session the threadbare arguments about tea and sugar duties, and give its attention to the more important and less threadbare topic of income-tax reform.

Apart from finance, the chief work of the new Session will be on the Bill for the amendment of trade union law. The Government has kept its secret well, for there is a remarkable difference in the forecasts of the measure; perhaps the secret has been easier to keep because the intentions of the Government are not quite settled and the Bill has not yet been finally drafted. According to some of the prophets, the Bill will deal only with certain abuses in trade union action such as picketing and the political levy; according to others it will make a secret ballot compulsory before a strike, and will declare the general strike to be illegal. Which of these two views or of several modifications of them that have been suggested is the correct one remains to be seen; but our own view, more than once expressed here, of what is necessary in the national interest remains unchanged. There are two tests of a good and useful Bill on this subject. The first is: Will it antagonize the legitimate trade union movement which has done so much for the welfare of the country? That would be a grave misfortune, both political and economic. A political misfortune, for it must be remembered that the origins of the present Labour Party were in certain legal decisions which made the funds of trade unions liable to damages in an action for the torts of its members during a strike, and the mere putting back of the law to that of the Osborne judgments would consolidate the labour unionist vote as nothing else could. An economic misfortune, for we are hopeful of trade union support in laying the foundations of an industrial peace. The second test is whether it will help the moderates or the extremists in the struggle that is going on for the soul of trade unions.

There are undoubtedly abuses in the practice of picketing, and a compulsory ballot of members before a strike can be begun might be a useful reform. But it would be preferable that these reforms should be made by the trade unions themselves and in any case they do not go to the root of the matter. What the State has an undoubted right to do is to prevent the immunity from civil action given to industrial disputes from being abused for political and revolutionary objects. This is a work which the State not only has a right to do but which no one but itself can do. The local strike can be left to take care of itself and to the discipline of the central organization. But a general strike, whether of all industries or of an essential industry in which a stoppage holds up the industrial life of the community, is not a weapon that ought to be left in the hands of any trade union committee, and to give it immunity in its use is suicidal folly, a direct incitement of the extremists to do their worst.

TROOPS FOR CHINA

IT is in the fashion to lay all the blame for our present difficulties with the Chinese Nationalists on the shoulders of Bolshevik agitators, and indeed the easiest and most natural explanation of any disagreeable event is always that it has been brought about by an intriguing enemy. We have no illusions about the feelings Moscow nourishes towards the British Empire, but we do not propose to flatter the Bolsheviks by suggesting that the troubles in China are wholly, or even mainly, due to their propaganda. In any case, the greater their influence over Mr. Chen and the moderates, the more important is it for us to leave them no peg on which to hang their propaganda.

In this REVIEW we have frequently urged that in the long run the Northerners in China were likely to show just as much hostility towards the foreigner as the Nationalists of the South. General Chang Tso-lin declares one day that he will fight until he has stamped out the particular breed of Bolshevism that flourishes in Canton, but he also declares the next day that the presence of British troops in China will drive him to join the Cantonese against Great Britain. At his instigation Mr. Wellington Koo in Peking has issued a Note demanding the withdrawal of British soldiers from Shanghai, and on his command Sir Francis Aglen, the Inspector-General of the Chinese Customs, out of which interest on foreign loans to China is paid, has been brutally dismissed. Therefore it is clearly nonsense, and dangerous nonsense, to pretend that we can solve the Chinese puzzle by calling the Bolsheviks names. We have no leisure for such pastimes when North and South China, the United States, Japan and France are all watching our policy with critical, and in some cases definitely unfriendly, interest.

During the week the situation has taken a turn for the worse. Mr. O'Malley and Mr. Chen, after three weeks' negotiation in Hankow, have drawn up an agreement governing the settlement of the question of the Hankow and Kiukiang Concessions, but Mr. Chen, acting under the influence of the extreme Nationalist wing, has apparently refused to sign the agreement "when British armed forces are concentrating at Shanghai." Similarly it is "the premature despatch of naval and military forces to China without the concurrence of the Chinese Government" which has led Mr. Wellington Koo to accuse the British Government of acting in contradiction to the League of Nations Covenant and to the resolutions adopted at the Washington Conference. Never has the case for moderation been more quickly, more dramatically, justified. The people who talked of using force have already got their answer. Even the sending of troops—in one way an eminently reasonable step—has provoked instant hostility. It is, of course, quite easy to reply to Mr. Wellington Koo that his Government has proved itself time and again quite unable to protect foreign citizens and that we must, therefore, take these measures of protection ourselves, but we are led, nevertheless, to ask ourselves what exactly is to be the mission of these soldiers, whose despatch threatens to unite

North and South China against us, and to endanger the success of the whole policy of concessions to China which the Foreign Office has so wisely initiated.

On many occasions in the past the British have borne naval and military burdens for others. The Concession at Shanghai is an international one, but, in view of the importance of the part played in it by British citizens, Whitehall might agree to take upon itself the chief responsibility for the maintenance of order in the present crisis. In a few weeks the British residents in the Shanghai settlement will be outnumbered by the British soldiers, but, if the measures taken by the War Office and the Admiralty were designed for the protection of all foreign citizens there, the Nationalists could not very well argue that our precautions were exaggerated. A force of some 16,000 men, supported by inadequate artillery, would be ridiculous for offensive purposes in a country of the extent of China. But if we are not sending troops to Shanghai to defend the International Concession as a whole, it may seem that we have allowed our natural determination to protect our own nationals to exaggerate our precautions in a manner which endangers the conciliatory policy outlined in our famous Memorandum.

It becomes increasingly clear that the other Powers concerned in the International Concession do not look with favour upon our military measures. The Japanese still argue that the despatch of troops may endanger the lives, not only of British subjects, but also of other foreigners in China, and Mr. Chen's refusal to sign the Hankow agreement will naturally confirm them in this belief. The attitude of Washington is interpreted in different ways, but the news that the American Chairman of the Shanghai Municipal Council has objected to British troops being quartered in Municipal buildings seems to indicate that Americans on the spot do not look to the British to protect them. The fact that the British Government, by its Memorandum, goes farther than any other Government has yet done to meet Chinese national aspirations seems everywhere to be forgotten, while British subjects in Shanghai are now faced with the necessity of stationing all British troops "on British-owned property exclusively," so unpopular do our military measures appear to make us.

Mr. Chen and Mr. Wellington Koo would like the British transports on their way to China to change their course and steer for home again. Such a step is obviously impossible. Measures so far advanced must be carried through, and there is no reason why Great Britain should continue to be handicapped by her distance from China. The Japanese or the Americans can bring troops to Shanghai in a few days, and we, with greater interests than they, should place ourselves on an equal footing. It is going to be very difficult to find room in Shanghai for the Shanghai Defence Force, and both Wellington Koo and Chen have shown how much the presence of this Defence Force would endanger a settlement. There is a possible way out. Though we cannot recall transports that have already set sail, we can divert them to Hong-Kong, which is a British possession, and about the political status of which there is no dispute.

A LETTER FROM WARSAW

[FROM OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT]

January 29, 1927

I RETURN to Warsaw after some months of absence with the same feeling each time—that it is the people, rather than the city, that attract. Warsaw was the step-child of Russia, and suffered from a neglect which was far worse than anything experienced by the other parts of Poland. The best of its architecture and its art in public places belong to an age long past, and it is only beginning to experience a true civic dignity, the result of freedom, that leads to civic pride and the encouragement of the arts. If I may make an exception, it is in favour of that sad corner of Warsaw adjoining the new Ministry of War, on the far side of the open square where once stood the Russian orthodox cathedral. It is the monument to Poland's "Unknown Soldier," in its dignity and simplicity one of the most poignant memorials in Europe. Otherwise the impression survives that Warsaw wants "doing up," and in the restoration of its medieval and Renaissance buildings, as well as in the design of its new adventures in domestic architecture, there should be room for full play to the rising genius of the younger school of Polish architects. There need be no fear that in the presence of such exquisite gems of a past age an exuberant Poland will run riot with the modern or deface the old.

Artistic life is going ahead in Warsaw rather rapidly, as though conscious of the release from old bonds and rejoicing in a new freedom. The nineteenth century was not favourable to the development of art in Warsaw. All that was artistically effective was politically in revolt, and the genius of the country sought its outlet abroad. This enforced touch with the outer world seems to have had a twofold effect upon the impressionable Poles. It made them nationally self-conscious, and the self-consciousness worked itself out to the detriment of their art. But on the other hand, the Poles were forced abroad. They chose Paris very largely, and they acquired the wide outlook and experience which come of keeping touch with the current thought and movements of other nations. This was a great gain. But Poland is only just beginning to recover from a national homesickness that was the habit of generations, and the precarious position of the newly formed state does not help towards quick recovery. Each district of partitioned Poland has to get to know its brothers, and the synthesis is a slow process. Though the Poles are at present in a consciously nationalist frame of mind, there is no fear that the international outlook will be lost.

Opera at least is thriving. The new work by M. Symanowski, entitled 'King Roger,' was the event of 1926. It was produced for the first time at Warsaw on June 19, and though written some time ago it had all the freshness of its composer's last work. The theme is King Roger II of Sicily, and the scene is laid in the twelfth century. It is full of melody, though sombre in places. Perhaps the most striking periods in the work are the oriental music of the second act, which is full of colour, and the finale. The characteristic feature of M. Symanowski's music is his mastery over choral music, and in this respect he was fortunate in having at his disposal the fine chorus of the Warsaw theatre.

Of the theatre there is little to write. One must fully appreciate the difficult Polish language to be in a position to deal fairly with it, and some hesitancy is therefore pardonable. The broad international outlook of the dozen theatres in Warsaw is admirable. During last year some 61 new pieces were produced, and of these about 30 per cent. were by Polish authors. The Polish theatre-going public does not get much

from the London stage. It looks rather to the Paris of Tristan Bernard, to Pirandello, to Vienna and Budapest, though (of all things) that great national American work 'Peg o' my Heart' had a phenomenal run. The Poles do not run after Shaw, preferring to leave that to Berlin. The historic Polish drama, of course, continues to have its day. The Poles seem to love having their hearts lacerated. Of late the finest thing of its kind has been Merejkowsky's 'Tsar Paul I' at the Theatre Polski, though the representation owed a very great deal to the brilliant manner in which it was mounted by M. Borowski.

The centre of Warsaw's musical life remains the Philharmonie. This fine orchestra is probably at the present moment at the zenith of its form, though, of course, there is nothing to stop it from going higher. Under M. Fitelberg it has "come on" enormously. It plays a considerable part in keeping up the tradition of Poland's musical relations with foreign countries. M. Egizio Massini, the conductor of the Royal Opera, Bucharest, who came to conduct two operas at Warsaw, 'Othello' and 'Carmen,' also gave a concert with the Philharmonie, when he rendered Beethoven's Fifth Symphony, and some new Rumanian music—at least it was new to Warsaw.

A curious phenomenon in the Polish literary world is the awakening of interest in the works of Joseph Conrad. They long had a vogue among that section of the Polish reading public which interested itself in English literature, but as the novels and stories get translated and published the interest grows apace. There is little about Poland in them, but Conrad, who is said to have thought with a Polish mind in French, and have then written in English, had evidently a Slav method of thinking that appeals to his brother Poles. Perhaps the fact that he was so deeply read in both the old and the new Polish literature helped to retain that "Polishness" which is the essence of the appeal. The Poles do not claim him, and speak of him as an English writer. But they claim to understand him.

Among the younger school of Polish writers, M. Kaden-Bandrowski is beginning to come to the front. His book, 'My Mother's Town,' published in 1925, is being or has been translated into English. Somebody has called him the Polish Proust, but he can stand up alone without that. I should call him an antidote to sentimentality, and that is a very useful thing to be, especially in Poland to-day.

ON THE TEARS OF GREAT MEN

BY HILAIRE BELLOC

SUNT lachrymæ rerum (etc.). And what is that to the point? Why, not at all. For whatever *rerum* may mean (and there are sixteen versions) "Great Men" it certainly is not. Why then do I set it down at the head of this? Why, because a man must make display of whatever little Latin or Greek he has, and this is the only lachrymal line running in my head for the moment. Moreover, one of the great arts in using tags is that they should be thoroughly well vulgarized and polished and known to the whole world. The other, converse, dodge (used with some effect) of trotting out bits of Latin and Greek no one has ever heard, is effective with the simple. But it is very dangerous; and that for the reason that your reader suspects you of having made them up. The 'Anatomy of Melancholy' suffered long from that.

Now it is not so with William Shakespeare. You may quote from Shakespeare anything you like, and it will always pass muster, however

bad, or commonplace, or silly or profound. Was it not in these very columns that I quoted once a sham couplet of his, entirely of my own invention?

Swift to your charges; naught was ever done Unless at some time it were first begun. William did not write this; but he might have. It is just like him. It is true, and not worth telling, and it rhymes.

Nor has all this, you may remark, anything to do with strong men or their tears.

You are right; I must to my subject, although it is a hateful thing to begin any piece of work, and I never put pen to paper without wishing that I had inherited an enormous fortune; in which case you may be very certain that I should never have put pen to paper. For it was well remarked by the great Dr. Johnson, that no one ever wrote save under the necessity of earning. At least, nowadays. I do not remember the passage exactly; but I suppose what he meant was that no one ever wrote anything worth reading save for money. For certainly an enormous amount of very fine stuff is produced by rich people who ought to know better, and who spoil the market for us scribblers.

And so to the tears of Great Men: for it is time that I embarked upon my subject.

Not indeed that it is a very engaging one, for the spectacle of a great man boohooing and blubbering and playing the cry-baby is very distressing: at any rate, it is distressing to us moderns. Our fathers thought nothing of it, and you will remark that till right down into the middle of the nineteenth century men weep copiously—in literature at least. I suppose the prejudice against it, like so many other startlingly modern differences from the past, is due to the public schools. Anyhow, there it is, and for my part I hope it will not last for long. I like the older habit. I want to see the grimacing and the puckering and to hear the sobs again. For if you will think of it, all history is full of such tears. And it is the greatest men who weep the loudest. The heroes roared upon all occasion, in every tragedy, epic and ballad. Yes; it was Arnold of Rugby who came along and stuffed the middle classes with a new and a worse repression. David wept for Absalom, and for Saul; and after a certain lapse of time he even wept for Uriah. He was proud of it, and set it down in writing. Moses wept upon three occasions, and Jacob once or twice. And Adam, our common father, must, I suppose, have wept—or we should not have inherited the habit; while as for Jeremiah, he was a very fountain of tears and wind-bag of ululation.

But to pass from Holy Writ to the baser profane authors; have we it not in Homer's 'Iliad' (Book 21) that Priam wept before Achilles in pleading for the body of Hector?—an advocate's tears! And Achilles himself (as witness Book 18 or Sigma) wept for Patroclus. Nay, the very horses of these Captains were so haunted by the current fashion that they copied their masters and wept in addressing their father Jove, as you may read in the same work (but in the 6th Book). Augustus wept when the Mantuan read out to him in a grave voice the 'Tu Marcellus Eris.' Naso wept to hear of his exile. Caracalla out of sheer rage, and Marcus

Aurelius from priggishness, or perhaps from a puny sentiment on hearing what a fool his wife had made of him.

Then have we not the tears of Scipio as he watched the fall of Carthage, and with your true passion for the tag, came out with the most hackneyed quotation that he could recall—perhaps he knew no other chanty :

Εσσεται ιμας οταν (κ.τ.λ.)

Coriolanus wept when he saw his mother—a forbidding woman; and Pluto, Lord of Hell, wept when Orpheus played to him a passage from Gluck—but these were iron tears. Alexander wept (though sober at the time) because he thought he had no more worlds to conquer. It was gross ignorance in him. There was still the north of India, all China, all the Western Mediterranean, including Tangitana and the golden light of the Hesperides, the Germans, the Britons, and Gaul, and the immense spaces of Scythia. But he did well to leave these last alone, for they bring no luck, whether to Napoleon or to Mrs. Thingumbob; indeed I never knew anyone who ever made an attack on Russia, whether by arms or by interview, who did not come to grief. Witness Prussia only the other day, the grave danger of Poland a few years ago, and the unfortunate history of the Grand Turk.

Charlemagne wept to see a pirate barque upon the sea, and St. Gregory the Great on hearing that a poor man had starved to death in the streets of Rome—a subject which would to-day, I hope, move us, who are more enlightened, to laughter rather than to tears. The great nobles gathered about the death-bed of Louis XIV wept bitterly, so eloquent was his last discourse; and he gravely begged their pardon for having thus disturbed their dignity. King Lear (it is true he is but a fellow in a book) wept copiously. But it was his own fault, as his Fool told him. If he had made Goneril and Regan bellow and roar it would have been more to his purpose. Hubert de Burgh in the same fiction weeps, and so does the melancholy Jacques. And if I am not mistaken, Mr. Allworthy wept upon at least one occasion in 'Tom Jones.' The anthology is full of great poets who follow suit, like the one who wept for Heraclitus, and the other greater one (greater although too softly Syrian) who wept for Heliodora.

But indeed all the poets in chorus have worked tears to death. How often have they not written the opening words: "Weep not for me . . ." which no one, by God, had the least intention of doing. Yet if I go on with the poets I shall be side-tracking myself and getting among the angels and the jack-asses; so let me return to the Great Men. Cromwell was perpetually bursting into tears. He sniffed and rubbed his eyes to see Charles the King with his children. Tears rolled down his cheeks in prayer, and again in domestic bereavement. He was one of the Great Snufflers of history, an unfailing and repetitive, as it were, chain weeper. George II (whom I suppose I may call a Great Man, for he was of Nordic stock and reasonable rich) cried when his wife died; Dr. Johnson at the memory of his mother; Pitt the Younger upon the news of Austerlitz, and under the effect of port; Macaulay, I am told, under the shock of a

stumor cheque. Thiers wept when he signed the capitulation to Bismarck, and Moltke in the last war when there reached him at headquarters in Luxemburg the news of the Marne. Alfred, Lord Tennyson, Laureate, wept, or at least allowed the tears to gather to his eyes, at the prospect of stubble in the English country-side. Carlyle wept when he was reminded of his wife, and his wife when she was reminded of Carlyle. Louis XVI wept because he was hen-pecked and Louis XV because he had no such luck. And Louis XVIII, if he wept at all, wept only through the excruciating agony of the gout.

With all this mass of example behind you, may you not conclude that the new-fangled fashion of swallowing one's tears and restraining one's sorrow and affecting a stony countenance has no long life before it? I suppose I shall not live to see the recrudescence of the pearly tear, but men who are young to-day will live to see it. They will hear of men high up Cabinet Ministers (if there are still such creatures forty years hence) snivelling upon losing office or the opportunity of a lucrative commercial position; speculators breaking down in the club as they watch the tape; and popular authors caterwauling when they read the reviews written upon them by reasonably well-educated men. I shall not live, I say, to see that recrudescence of a very honest, necessary and human habit; but it will come. Meanwhile I take consolation in this as in every other matter, from the glories of the past.

MARRIAGE AND THE COUNT

BY J. B. PRIESTLEY

A LITTLE paragraph in the newspaper has just informed me that Count Keyserling, of the School of Wisdom, Darmstadt, has declared that a happy marriage stifles self-development, and that unhappily married people "do less harm to their souls than those who are happily married." Here is a judgment of the first importance. It comes to us from the School of Wisdom. This is the first time I have heard of the School of Wisdom, but I have long suspected that something was going on somewhere, that behind the daft flux of things in this world of ours, wisdom was being sought and being found. I had great hopes once of that institution at Fontainebleau, which kept some of our more profound thinkers busy with a shovel for several weeks and started humanity once more on its pilgrimage to the stars by combining fancy-dress and digging and the higher or newer rhythm. Does it still exist? Can it be possible that some of its distinguished converts are still digging, that they have been digging now for several years without being rewarded by a single paragraph? Such questions, however, are merely idle, for now we have Darmstadt and its School of Wisdom. Of the Count, presumably the head of the School, I have some slight knowledge, for I can boast not of having read but at least of having looked into his 'Travel Diary of a Philosopher,' in which he records, at great length and with excusable complacency, the

progress of his self-development in various continents. What is the Count's own relation to marriage? The query is not a mere impertinence. If he has never been married, then he is plainly discussing a subject about which he knows nothing, for however wise a man may be, it is certain that he knows nothing about marriage unless he has been married himself. If he has been unhappily married, then he is anything but a disinterested commentator. If he has been or is happily married, then he contradicts his theory in his own person, having developed himself without hindrance and, as his book tells us, having done good to his soul in almost every part of the world.

The judgment is of the first importance not only because it comes from the School of Wisdom, but also because it has to do with marriage. We are all discussing marriage now. In old novels and plays, the married state was simply the shining goal, and the curtain came down to the sound of wedding bells. Then the novelists and dramatists discovered a fruitful theme in unhappy marriage, in which one partner cruelly ill-treated the other, or at least was so indifferent that only the most unfeeling moralist would demand that the wretched pair should use the same dining-table. Those were the brave days when wives and husbands could complain of not being "understood" without raising a laugh. We have now arrived at a third stage as a glance at the most characteristic novels and plays of to-day will show. In them marriages are wrecked not because one partner does not love enough, but because he or she loves too much. We are asked to sympathize with husbands who complain that their homes are too comfortable and their wives too kind and devoted, with wives who are in despair because their husbands give them too much money, are too attentive, and will not flirt with other women. In addition, the offending partner is frequently shown to have a weakness for children and possibly a morbid desire to be the parent of one or two. When triangular plotting first became fashionable, such people would be set down as being happily married and would therefore be useless to the writer, who only wanted characters who were very unhappily married, but could be made happy by being divorced and then united to someone else. But the contemporary characters do not want to marry someone else, they do not want marriage at all. I could never understand what ailed them before, but now the Count has made it plain: they feel that their self-development is being stifled. For their souls' sakes, they shatter these fetters of domestic bliss and escape into liberty, free air, and the "Dog's Body" night club.

As it is marriage itself that terrifies us now, it naturally follows that a happy marriage is regarded as being more dangerous than an unhappy one. We have left behind those charming old legends of wives and husbands who were "misunderstood" and went in quest of their ideal partner. The contemporary husband knows that his wife understands him only too well, and so he casts about for women who do not understand him and in whose company he can resurrect some of the happy pretences and poses of his youth. The shingled and kilted wife is not flying from the drunken bestiality and brutal

wrath of her husband, but from his affectionate interest and his friendly and discerning glances. He knows too much about her. If these people were questioned, they would probably hint that marriage was not fit for them, but in their heart of hearts they believe that they are not fit for marriage. It demands too much. It is like paying an endless visit in your worst clothes. It asks two people, after they have sighed and smiled and kissed in a midsummer madness, to worry through from year's end to year's end in company, and yet remain interested in and even excited about one another. All cheap devices and weaknesses and poses are in full view. Each personality is left shivering without a rag of pretence. You are compelled to live with the one person to whom you cannot easily and unblushingly tell a lie. Is this all? It is not even a beginning. In this Greenland of compulsory honesty you are asked to be for ever interested and sympathetic and affectionate, so many smiles and bright glances. And then there is talk of a three-fold harmony, physical, mental, spiritual, between you and this companion, notwithstanding the fact that the pair of you must always be trapesing behind the scenes of life. Now, just for a night or two, on a holiday, let us say, with a little extra money in our pockets and our best clothes on, with all our little weaknesses and idiocies carefully tucked away out of sight, we could build up the most colossal harmonies with strange and delightful creatures of the other sex. But to live so horribly intimately with one, to marry one—it is a monstrous notion! And this is marriage! Where are we to find the beings so toweringly honest and kindly, so radiant with sympathy and affection, that they can enter this state and yet be happy?

The School of Wisdom at Darmstadt would seem to be surrounded by such beings, all happily married but—alas!—all having their self-development stifled and harm done to their souls. Now I do not doubt for a moment that this is true, that happy marriages are apt to stifle self-development. I should not be surprised if there were not a single happily married person developing himself or herself in the School of Wisdom. It is an undoubted fact that the people who have been fortunate enough to pass through this fiery ordeal of matrimony and find happiness in transit, have hardly ever bothered their heads about the higher things. Instead of loving all humanity, they have merely devoted themselves, in loving service, to a tiny group of real human beings. It is only when this, what we might call the narrow way, has failed them that people take the broad way and begin to love all humanity and to work for the whole human race, this love and service, of course, taking the usual form, that of discussion with an inner circle of initiates and of lectures and little books for the guidance of the ignorant multitude. There is certainly something about an unhappy marriage that compels the victims of it to develop themselves. They do not all take the same path. Many husbands whose wives have left them try to develop themselves by taking the lower path, that of whisky and the "Dog's Body" night club. Women, however, being more spiritual, frequently take the higher path. Shortly after their husbands have run away, they will be found discussing the

coming of the great World Teacher; or they are claimed by the higher thought or the newer rhythm; they brood over former lives, spent as a rule in the more refined and influential circles of Ancient Babylon; they become authorities on the subject of the astral plane or the sub-conscious and super-conscious minds; and they find their way to schools of wisdom. I have met some of these self-developed ladies and have not found it difficult to believe that a happy marriage was not for them. It was impossible to imagine them allowing anything of theirs to be stifled. One could see that they would have their souls' welfare at heart from the very day the honeymoon ended. Their husbands were only serving this higher call, this finer destiny, when they ran away and left them in peace with their souls and their self-development. We can only hope that some of them have by this time arrived at the School of Wisdom, where the Count takes marriage and then marriage takes the count.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

- ¶ The Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW welcomes the free expression in these columns of genuine opinion on matters of public interest, although he disclaims responsibility alike for the opinions themselves and the manner of their expression.
- ¶ Letters on topical subjects, intended for publication the same week, should reach us by the first post on Wednesday.

THE FREEDOM OF FLEET STREET

SIR,—As a journalist of thirty-five years' standing, allow me to thank you for your leading article under this heading. It was temperate, restrained and uttered not a single statement which could not be proved to the hilt. It strikes me as being one of those contributions to the literature of the day out of which the history of current times is subsequently created.

Fleet Street is in a low estate. The working journalist is called on to make bricks without straw, the straw being the social, clerical or accidental distinction which the day provides. May Lord Reading prove a new Moses and lead him forth from this bondage.

It was an unhappy day when the financial broker and company promoter got his foot in the Street and discovered how ignorant the journalist was, though he might be owner of his paper and enjoy a world-wide reputation, of the financial potentialities of his property if cleverly set forth in a prospectus. That has all been changed to-day. And there is not a working journalist between Temple Bar and Ludgate Circus who does not at this moment know that, to use Kipling's words, to-morrow for you or me "five hundred men can take your place or mine."

It is bitter but it is life. Do those who wield this power get more satisfaction out of existence (they openly boast they have no hopes of eternity) than you or me?

I am, etc.,

"A MAN OF NO IMPORTANCE"

The Press Club

ROAD DAMAGE

SIR,—A current discussion in the Northern Press has brought into the limelight the serious financial consequence to the nation of the ever-increasing destruction of roads, requiring drastic remedial action formerly urged in your columns.

The Secretary of the Scottish Railway Stockholders' Protection Association, from the estimate of Sir Henry Maybury that the wear and tear on the roads by heavy transport may be taken at three-pence per mile, deduces that each ten-ton lorry costs

£1,500 per annum for repairing its road damage. On the recently increased scale of taxation it only contributes £60 towards that. On consideration of the facts his conclusion seems warranted.

We authoritatively know that £70,000,000 was spent in 1923 in repairing road damage in England and Wales alone. We have it on the authority of the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders themselves that £55,600,000 was expended in 1923. This decrease had, however, been accompanied by ever-increasing, clamorous complaints throughout the country for satisfactory road maintenance. These large sums take no account whatever of the cumulative damage to property from the "shake and shatter" of those road-destroying vehicles, nor of any of the great cost of keeping them in repair. The colossal total expenditure renders it abundantly clear that useful and convenient as it is to the few, road transport as yet is conducted at an aggregate loss to the nation, and it seems also to the vehicle industry itself. As long as in wheel construction the simple cardinal fact that "motion cannot be resisted" continues to be ignored and violated, one national asset will continue to be unnecessarily pounded to destruction by those "earthquakes on wheels."

Our forefathers when confronted with a much milder form of road destruction by stage-coaches taxed each of them £1,000 per annum. This did, at any rate, directly relieve the rate and taxpayers of their intolerable burden. Our imperative objective by progressive action now must be to attain economical road transport to benefit the whole community. It can be done. Existing interests have, however, fatuously persisted in resisting instead of utilizing motion, and also in resisting essential change now urged by our well-intentioned Government in the interest of the community and the vehicle industry itself.

Now the root cause of the catastrophic waste long inflicted upon us is the reactionary shock from the tremendous energy generated by the mechanically-driven wheel. The ultimate remedy for our present disastrous plight appears to lie in diverting this present misdirected energy of road shock and utilizing it. It was definitely proved years ago that this can be done to great economic advantage.

Legislative action for approved methods for the preservation of roads, property, health and comfort, is the obvious prerequisite of their adoption. If the measures indicated from the Throne to this Parliament "for the control of road vehicles" are soundly carried out, then all interests can be freed from the present bondage of intolerable taxation, due to avoidable vibration.

I am, etc.,
JOHN MUIR

MEDIEVALISM AND VULGARITY

SIR,—With a charming medieval distinction of style, unattainable by such vulgar moderns as myself, Mr. D. B. Wyndham Lewis describes John Richard Green as "blown upon." No doubt the Catholic bellows has been at work, but I really cannot agree to read only such books as have been passed by the Pope and Mr. Belloc.

As a professional humorist he is entitled by usage to drag in Mr. Henry Ford, who will surely be rewarded in Heaven for making life so easy for the funny men.

By his grand (and single) claim that the Middle Ages were never vulgar I cannot be greatly impressed. Had I lived in that blissful time I should, as a heretic, have been tortured and roasted by the gentle champions of the Faith. That the officer in charge of the incinerator might have been a gentleman of impeccable literary taste, as ignorant of Freud as of

Ford, and as untainted by wireless as by Wells, does not strike me as effective consolation. Into the essence of vulgarity perhaps I had better not penetrate, since it might involve me in examination of the antics of the Faithful. And that would, I am confident, seem dreadfully vulgar to the delicate sensibilities of our champions of the rack-and-roast age.

I am, etc.,
IVOR BROWN

'THE NETHERLANDS DISPLAY'D'

SIR,—While sincerely thanking you for the generous attention given to 'The Netherlands Display'd,' may I be allowed to answer one or two points raised by your reviewer whose statements seem slightly difficult to follow?

For instance, why warn "the unwary reader" that this is not "a popular history of the Low Countries," when the reviewer himself quotes from the preface in which it is stated that the work claims to be not history, but "studies of the local atmosphere of the eleven Provinces"? It was never my aim to write a *history* of the Netherlands, and surely this is made clear by the very scope and nature of the book.

The half quotation about Erasmus does not give an accurate idea of what is said in the text, where, I think, his attitude towards the Reformation is made fairly clear; "the history of Erasmus is the history of the Reformation, *and of learning*" is meant literally, i.e., to write of one is to write of the other, *not* to say that they are the same thing.

I regret indeed the printer's error in the title of Grotius's famous book, but printers' errors and slips are difficult to keep pace with in a work so full of foreign names (is it possible that your reviewer has been a victim of such an error in that "typography" should read "topography"?). It may easily be disputed that "Grotius was the greatest of all Dutchmen," and in a short book dealing with an immense subject, treatment of the most illustrious individuals must necessarily be "perfunctory." I did not write, "of course," but "naturally" with regard to the placing of Grotius's masterpiece on what your reviewer calls "the index," and surely under the circumstances it was natural enough?

As for the last paragraph of your review, I frankly do not quite understand it; what is said there about the Netherlands has long been common knowledge to me, and is incorporated again and again in the present volume—see chapter nine (North Holland), ancient Amsterdam, the constant references to the Golden Age, the Revolution, etc., so I do not know what more could have been said on these points in a book of this nature, where so much besides politics is dealt with, nor how one is "hardly mindful of the true significance, etc., of Dutch history" when one has been at the pains to write a book *inspired by these same significances!*

I cannot quite agree that the book is "scrappy in form" as it is divided into eleven sections, one for each province, and under each of these headings are grouped all the subjects appertaining.

I am, however, grateful to your reviewer for "presuming accuracy in fact," which is not a usual virtue of a "gossiping guide."

Again thanking you for your valued notice.

I am, etc.,
MARJORIE BOWEN

37a Craven Terrace, W.2

THE DRINK PROBLEM

SIR,—I suppose that Mr. Thomas is connected with the liquor trade. Naturally, that great private monopoly dislikes the Carlisle scheme. I notice that the plea for the suspension of the 1904 Act in Mr.

Thomas's first letter has appeared in other Press letters all over the country.

The Chief Constable of Carlisle, who presumably speaks with an authority not possessed by anyone else, states in his last report: "It is gratifying to note that drinking by women is still on the decline . . ." So much for the temperance women of Wigton. The Rev. Mr. Jeans and the Cecil Street Congregation are adequately answered by a statement issued last year by nine out of the eleven principal Free Church Ministers of Carlisle, from which the following is an extract:

In our concern for the best expression of civic life, we regard the Carlisle experiment as an effort to combat those evils which private management has hitherto failed to overcome.

We are, therefore, convinced that, if the trade is still to be with us, the experiment is a step in the right direction; and we are persuaded that its results are a distinct improvement upon the state of affairs which obtained under the old system of private ownership. We further give it as our opinion that where the question of profits is made subservient to the encouragement of the temperate life of the people the results will be to the advantages of civic life.

In a matter of this kind I do not myself place any reliance upon the views of the prohibitionist who is obviously opposed to the sale of drink in any form. The evidence of the representative citizens of Carlisle is all in favour of the scheme.

On the question of redundant licences there is still one "on" licence to every 486 of the population, comprising men, women and children, and including abstainers as well as non-abstainers. This hardly confirms Mr. Pace's endorsement of Mr. Thomas's letter. Besides, if redundancy does not exist, why is it that brewery companies are so ready to surrender two, three or more licences in one area for the privilege of a licence in a new district?

I am, etc.,
D. C. DERING

Nonneys,
Oxshott, Surrey

BETTER PUBLIC HOUSES

SIR,—I am glad to see you are giving a little space to this subject. Until a public house becomes a public house in the fullest meaning of the phrase, one can expect no very great reform. Do away with all partitions. Do not make a man, still less a woman, feel there is something not quite right in having a small stimulant over the bar. Kill this damnable false sentiment, largely fostered by the Lloyd George Act of seventeen years ago, and you do away with any amount of secret tipping.

The greatest war reform was closing licensed houses during the afternoon. I trust this will always continue. These two dead hours mean the ventilation of the public house. Before the War I have been of an afternoon in a perfectly respectable bar where one had only to drink a lemonade to come out fuzzed, if not drunk. The air was heavy with the fumes of alcohol. But as things are, that has vanished, though much remains to be done if the public house is to be a blessing to the community as it well may be, and not a curse.

I am, etc.,
Gloucester Road, S.W.7 J. P.

THE MIND OF THE SCHOOLMASTER

SIR,—Last week I visited one of the smaller public schools, and was immediately bombarded by the headmaster with questions relating to the football prospects of another school in which he knew me to be interested. During the several hours I spent with him I gathered no inkling of any concern on his part other than athletics, except once when he made an oblique apology for the social standing of one of his staff. Every inquiry I made regarding other matters connected, irrelevantly enough no doubt, with school life—such as work—he invariably evaded.

Is this typical of other masters of greater or of less importance? One would like to know.

I am, etc.,
L. B. G.

THE RULES OF BRIDGE

SIR,—I was surprised and disgusted in finding you in your "Notes of the Week" of January 29, associating yourself with those renegades who take a pleasure in decrying everything English and boasting foreign institutions. I refer to your attack on the Portland Club, where you league yourself with the writer whose gross calumnies have already been to some extent dealt with in the *Sunday Times* of January 30. The writer is, I should imagine, as ignorant of the true principles of bridge as Ouida was of racing, as exemplified in her "Under Two Flags." The Portland Club, from the days of Cavendish and Clay, i.e., for more than sixty years, has been a boon and blessing to all English card players, ever ready to clear up and give a first-rate judicial decision on any point submitted (i.e., on whist, bridge, etc.), and without payment: and is as far superior to anything similar in America as our Courts of Justice are to their American counterparts. The Portland Club is in fact similar in status to the Jockey Club, or the M.C.C., i.e., beyond compare in its class. The innovations in bridge brought in by Americans are to my mind damnable and involve the learning and adopting a sort of "Danzig Code" delightful to the feminine idea, but utterly foreign to the real principles of the game. The point on which you lay stress which at first sight does seem to have some show of reason, is that any call of three should beat a call of two, is of course nullified by our system of values, and rightly so, for as twenty is more than eighteen, two No Trumps is more than three clubs.

Your idea of there being no mobility in minor suits is utterly wrong: more variations are possible with our system than the American, and there is a certain amount of attention required in the calling which gives a distinct piquancy. I trust, Sir, your prophecy as to the American system prevailing may be a false one. In a word, Sir, all the American innovations are either for the worse, or else they are simply made for the sake of change, e.g., as pointed out in the *Sunday Times* in cutting for partners the highest have choice of seats; what earthly reason is there for changing the long-established whist rule on the subject, except from a desire to ostracize or fall foul of English custom? It is notorious that English club-players who have played in New York clubs find the standard of play there inferior to our own (I mean speaking of players of the first class). I think, Sir, you owe a handsome apology to the Portland Club, for your attack on it, based on supreme ignorance.

I am, etc.,
SPENCER COX

Budleigh Salterton Club

[We do not admit that by chronicling and partially endorsing the attack upon the Portland Club already delivered by Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett, we are in any way underrating the indebtedness of all British card players to that admirable institution. It is just because the Portland holds and holds deservedly, so high a position in the world of cards that we are anxious it should not lose any of its authority by opposing, or refusing to countenance, the developments that outside of Great Britain have transformed—and in our opinion have made more open, more varied, and livelier—the game of bridge. If Mr. Spencer Cox has any doubts as to which is likely to prevail—the British system of calling or the American—he cannot, or cannot recently, have played much abroad. In any cosmopolitan company the players who only know the Portland Club rules are already and decidedly a minority.—ED. S.R.]

A PROTEST FROM PUDSEY

SIR,—With reference to the proposed change of the name Oswaldtwistle to Oswald, I am desired emphatically to contradict a rumour which may be current in the neighbourhood of Pudsey to the effect that the local Council contemplates adopting for that delectable district the agnomen Sacheverel.

I am, etc.,

ARTHUR HARVEY

London, W.C.

IDENTITY OF TRUTH AND REASON

SIR,—Sir Oliver Lodge says that the mind makes the body. Fifty or more years ago Canon Kingsley said: "Your soul makes your body, just as a snail makes its shell. It is enough for us to know that whether or not we have lived before, we shall live again."

Many are so constituted that they know by *a priori* intuition that the soul and mind make the body, and some can demonstrate that they do, to the extent of being able to advance a theoretical explanation of the feasible psycho-physiological processes by which they make it, in all the abstract and concrete contingencies of their integrative and disintegrative relativity. This being so, it would be interesting to know what possible iota of rationality there can be in studying such sciences as biology, physiology, psycho-physiology and therapeutics by vivisection experiments?

Sir Michael Foster compared the attempt to localize brain-function by electrical stimulation experiments on animals' brains, to "playing the piano with a broomstick"; but that only recognized the clumsiness of the method as applied to an organ whose functions are so subtle, elusive, and inclusively contingent and inter-operative as those of the brain. When we realize that every soul and mind—i.e., conscious functionality—makes its own brain and contingent physical vital organs, the absolute uniqueness of every individual self-conscious personality becomes an imperative logical necessity; and any position which makes unreason its last word stands self-condemned.

I am, etc.

M. L. JOHNSON

6 The Polygon, Clifton, Bristol

P'S AND Q'S

SIR,—Can any of your readers oblige me with the source of the following quotation:

It takes two for a kiss,
Only one for a sigh,
Twain by twain we marry,
One by one we die

S. SEWELL

SIR,—Is it possible to obtain information with regard to the date on which trousers were introduced into this country?

TREVOR THOMAS

"WHEN GREEK MEETS GREEK"

SIR,—In your issue of January 29, under heading P's and Q's, R. K. S. asks for the author of the familiar line: "When Greek meets Greek, then comes the tug of war." His quotation is wrong, the line being: "When Greeks joined Greeks, then was the tug of war." The author is Nathaniel Lee.

GEORGE RATHBONE

SIR,—In answer to R. K. S., the author is Nathaniel Lee, and the line occurs in his play 'Alexander the Great,' Act 4, scene 2.

EDITH A. WALTERS

5 February 1927

[We have also received replies to this query from D. D. M., W. S., Geo. H. Liston-Foulis, O. E. Bodington, Richard Niven, Miss C. E. Hoskins, Mab Ram, and H. M. Corderoy. The title 'The Rival Queens' was subsequently changed to 'Alexander the Great'.]

"PERHAPS IT WAS RIGHT . . ."

SIR.—In answer to Mr. T. Palmer, the following lines occur in Bickerstaff's play, " 'Tis well 'tis no worse," readapted by John Philip Kemble, under the title of 'The Panel' (Act 1, scene 1):

When late I attempted your pity to move,
Why seemed you so deaf to my prayers?
Perhaps it was right to dissemble your love
But—Why did you kick me downstairs?

OLIVER E. BODINGTON

[Replies to this query have also been received from H. M. Corderoy, Miss C. E. Hoskins, and Richard Niven.]

ANON

SIR.—Mrs. Winifred Compton will find "anon" used in an old proverb: "Two 'anons' and a by and by is an hour and a half."

RICHARD NIVEN

SIR.—In answer to Mrs. Compton, "anon" is derived from the middle English "in oon" "in our"; Old High German "in ein"; Anglo-Saxon "on ane" = in one, together, straightway.

OLIVER E. BODINGTON

SIR.—In answer to Mrs. Compton, one can only guess at the derivation of anon. My best dictionary thinks it is from the Anglo-Saxon on an, an an, = in one; old English, anan, anoon, anone. Junius, according to Johnson, guessed that "in one" was short for "in one minute." In etymology there is plenty of scope for guessing.

MAB RAM

SIR.—The words on, an old or middle English, formerly meant "in one body" or "continually."

In the year 1122, the two words became "anon" in the south and took its present meaning. On was added to an for the same reason as we add a letter, e.g. 25A.

M. PORRITT

"APT ALLITERATION"

SIR.—The phrase: "Apt alliteration's artful aid," occurs in Charles Churchill's poem, 'The Prophecy of Famine.'

BRIAN PHILLIPS

BEARDS

SIR.—Not only throughout the eighteenth, but during the second half of the seventeenth century, the beard was in disfavour. Its return dates from the Crimea, the veterans of which suffered their hair to grow partly as a protection against the cold of that memorable winter. On their return, the beard and its second cousin the "Dundreary whiskers" became the indispensable ornament of the man about town.

"That bush of wisdom," remarks Montaigne. If wisdom be the concomitant of the beard may the razors of our legislators rust!

M. W. B. PEMBERTON

THE THEATRE**THE HARD STUFF**

BY IVOR BROWN

Interference. By Roland Pertwee and Harold Dearden. The St. James's Theatre.

The Desperate Lovers. By Alfred Sutro. The Comedy Theatre.

DRAMATIC critics, like other people who must be articulate for their living, occasionally find themselves with nothing to say. Readers of this REVIEW may complain that I have proved the fact painfully and frequently and that I should be tactful not to mention the matter. But your critic at a loss has always one refuge: he can relate the plot. On the other hand this subterfuge is not always easy and in the case of 'Interference' I should be sorry to have to explain why everything happened as it did and why all things worked together to give Sir John Marlay such a very troublesome night. But the authors have made a pretty pattern of their tangle; old friends like the man who comes back from the dead and the black but comely "vamp" who clutches the bottle in one hand and the compromising letters in the other fit into new niches; there is a phial for prussic acid, a drawer for cheques to blackmailers, and an awkward corner for vanity bags left carelessly in the wrong flat. You may say that the furniture of 'Interference' consists of antiques: you must also admit that they have been neatly polished and disposed for the occasion. At the close of a week whose nocturnal routine had clamped me to a new bad play every twenty-four hours 'Interference' was a great relief. It was an unpretentious story of the old style, wittily and concisely told, and it was played with a competence which deserves a superlative adjective for that humble noun.

Sir Gerald du Maurier has perfected the idiom of production for pieces of this kind. It is essentially an English idiom. It is firm, but not furious. It is the hard stuff with plenty of polish and no jagged edge. In such drama, where the Americans are slick, we are smooth. We have a repose to set against their rapidity. We oppose the stiff upper lip of the gentleman at bay to their wagging of the chin, their snappy volubility. Sir Gerald himself maintains a remarkable standard of muted expressiveness as Sir John Marlay. It is the best part he has had for some time since the infallible adroitness, for which he is so justly renowned, is not enough. The great doctor is, in the trade sense, a "character" part and the actor conceals the familiar graces of Sir Gerald the hero under the consulting-room manner of Sir John the specialist. The simulation of that manner with its charm and its secretiveness, its gloss of urbanity and its foundation of self-confidence, is so accurate as to make the rendering a skin-tight fit for the rôle. Yet there is just a shade of satire and of malice, as it were the layman's smile at professional omniscience. The result is delightful and Sir John is a gentleman whom we shall all be very pleased to meet.

Where this play is so much better than others of this kind is in its decorative detail. The minor characters are not just conveniences. They are studied in the round, lovingly and with rich results. There is Dr. Puttock, the scrubby little police-surgeon who has a natural disgust for suicides who choose his bridge evening for their operations. Three journalists appear and not one of them is the usual seedy grotesque of the stage convention who carries a pencil behind his ear as it were a straw in the hair. (In this respect Messrs. Pertwee and Dearden may claim to be better dramatists than Messrs. Shaw and Galsworthy.) Men-servants, policemen, lift-boys—all are done with an eye. The ladies come nearer to the

tiresome type and live by virtue of the plot's necessity rather than by any inherent and private vitality. But, where so much is fresh, it would be absurd to grumble.

Sir Gerald du Maurier has produced the play brilliantly and proves himself an exception to the rule that he who takes the chief part should not direct the whole. He justifies the old status of actor-manager by his complete unselfishness; he is perpetually ready to take a corner when the play suggests that another should take the centre. He fills his part without letting it swell and he has got the very best results from a very good team. As Philip Voaze, a broken libertine on whose arteries death is tightening its grip, Mr. Herbert Marshall has the kind of part which, in ordinary circumstances, would be abominably over-worked. This actor, so long condemned to present the devastating benevolence of colonial uncles, showed in Mr. Coward's last play that he could take a proper chance. His last rôle was an excellent essay in frigid artifice: this is no less excellent in easy naturalism. He has a drunken scene and gives us not a sign of the idiotic hiccoughing and tottering which are so remote from the somnolent actualities of alcohol. The thoughtless actor, under medical sentence of death, does not so much knock at death's door as bang its panels down. Mr. Marshall, with his sinking, but not sunken, look and his little dry choked cough, taps at the door instead of slogging it and so conforms to the temperate discipline with which Sir Gerald has moulded the general presentation. Mr. Spencer Trevor as the divisional surgeon is delicious and Mr. Basil Loder, Mr. Herbert Waring, and Mr. Frank Lawton all help to prove that, even where the theme is melodramatic, peaceful persuasion can be a potent form of attack.

On the highly skilled quietism of the whole affair, I have only one criticism to make. Its absolute correctness does not make it relatively correct to an unpunctual audience which brings its cough with it. Sir Gerald du Maurier cannot compel his audience to learn manners and, if the tenants of the stalls come dribbling in at intervals of two minutes throughout the first act and go through the familiar process of banging down their seats and asking each other what it is all about before settling to a good evening of catarrhal discharges, the only policy which will fairly reward the punctual and the peaceable is a general raising of voices in proportion to the tumult. Perhaps, also, the programme-sellers might be commanded to offer throat-lozenges instead of chocolates. Miss Moyna MacGill plays the part of Lady Marlay, difficult because empty, with a good show of pathos and Miss Hilda Moore first attracts our attention by a firm delineation of flightiness and then our sympathy by prolonged immobility as a corpse. I trust that Miss Moore will not take a cough from those members of the audience who appeared so eager to distribute that malady. An itching throat or nose would render Act II, Scene II, an Ixion's wheel for the unfortunate actress.

About Mr. Sutro's play, the more silence the greater the charity. People who attempt to reshape the formulae of Wilde should first consider the importance of being witty. Hard stuff of this brittle kind must be excellent to be endurable. In any case, the play which is all pattern and no pulse has been worked so hard recently that only a supreme skill can keep its thin-spun life in reasonable expectation of survival. Sir Barry Jackson's resolution to absent him from rusticity awhile has not made a happy journey from Devonshire's golden strand to this frothy world of bad epigrams where even Miss Irene Vanbrugh can fail to be interesting. Mr. Sutro has shown some skill with the heavy-weight drama. If he insists on setting up as a froth-blower, the less we are together, etc., etc. At least that was the only conclusion I could derive from 'The Desperate Lovers.'

ART

PATTERNS

BY ANTHONY BERTRAM

HERE are few things which date more obviously than patterns. Even the plays of Wilde do not seem so demodified as the wall-papers of Morris. Your revivalist is never so happy as when he is covering a chair with "period" tapestry or hanging his lattice window with a grandmotherly chintz. In the simple, tum-titty-tum rhythm of patterns the common soul can express for itself the mood of a moment. The exalted soul, burrowing out of the moment into universality, demands the infinite subtlety of pictorial or sculptural or architectural rhythm. So it is that the patterns of an age, like the popular songs, come and go with that age, and are only sought again by those who desire to revive it. How will our patterns seem to the antiquarian of A.D. 3000?

First of all, as in our furniture and architecture and printing, he will remark an unconscionable amount of revivalism. But let that pass. It is altogether another and very strange phenomenon. Perhaps the first relevant thing he will remark about the pattern making of *circa* 1926 is the simplicity of material. We do not produce brocades or damasks or tapestries which are modern in design. We produce book covers and cotton fabrics. This is, no doubt, part of that same mood which has made plain, distempered walls so marked a characteristic of modern interior decoration. Rich stuffs go with panelled or stuff-hung walls, or at least demand the massive support of oil painting and gilt frames. Our walls, with their drawings, prints, even woodcuts, would look thin were our curtains in heavy, velvet-pile brocades, deep purples and ruby reds.

And then for the character of the design. The colours are, as a rule, simple and restless. Direct blues and reds and yellows, harmonized by contrast rather than by blending. The soft, indeterminate, complex shades of the "Liberty" period are no longer affected by the moderns. They already smack of the hand-woven, sandalled, vegetarian enthusiasms of the last generation; they are as pre-war as suffragettes and aesthetic socialists. At least this was true a year or so ago, when Heal's reigned in the place of Liberty's; but already there are signs of a new movement towards quieter, though still simple colours. I have noticed this particularly at the exhibition in the North Court of the Victoria and Albert Museum, which has been organized by the British Institute of Industrial Art; and in the new shop, "Modern Textiles," which has been opened at 46 Beauchamp Place, off the Brompton Road. I believe Mr. Paul Nash to be one of the principal influences in this change. His colour has never been gaudy, and recently he has adopted what I have called elsewhere the "white" school of colouring. By the use of a great deal of white he gives peculiar value to his delicate browns and greens. Miss Winifred Nicholson is another distinguished exponent of this method, using her white to bring out with striking force the poignancy of her reds and greens. Among the artists who work for "Modern Textiles," besides Mr. Nash, are Miss Little, Miss Phyllis Barron and Mr. Norman Wilkinson. The general tendencies of these established workers are to be found also in the pupil work from the London County Council and the Leicester College of Arts and Crafts.

The designs are, for the most part, of two kinds, though a similar instinct underlies both: both avoid geometrical pattern. The one kind is to select a pictorial motive, and work it out by repetition and conventionalization. M. Raoul Dufy, in France, has

gone far with this method. In Mr. Fry's recent book, 'Transformations,' is illustrated a printed stuff known as "Longchamps," in which—among foliage and roses—horses, jockeys and society-at-tea disport themselves before a building in the classical-frivolous style. There is no attempt, of course, at picture-making. In an article published in number 3 of that excellent periodical, *Drawing and Design*, there are further illustrations of M. Dufy's use of subject-motives in this manner, a tennis party, fishing, sailors and negroes dancing.

At South Kensington is an admirable book cover by Mr. Edward Bowden for 'Architectural Decoration in Stone, Wood and Fibrous Plaster.' The motive is a group of horses, a church, a patch of sky. In the London County Council frame are designs based on men chopping wood, a man and a woman pilgrimaging, a tree, stag and dog, a man fishing. W. Foxton, Ltd., show a romantic curtain composed of mermaids, mitres, ships, rampant goats, the cat and the fiddle and the man with a load of mischief.

The second style of pattern which I have observed is the taking of a somewhat complex, and not obviously balanced motive, and repeating it in small. This is Mr. Nash's style. The essential unity of a pattern is preserved by the repetition, but the charm and excitement of variety is suggested by the unsymmetrical and original character of the unit. It will be seen, therefore, that the principle of modern pattern making is to adopt an irregular motive and regularize the pattern by its repetition, thereby escaping from the strict orderliness of Jacobean design and the incoherence of pre-Raphaelite design. There is no struggling.

THE IMMORTALS

BY MARTIN ARMSTRONG

BELOVED, in this world of Sense
We have the one omnipotence :
None but we Lovers can erase
The foolish laws of Time and Place
Or gather, by their wedded power,
Eternity into an Hour.

So to the four winds let us cast
Vague Future and abysmal Past
And, proud of Body, leave behind
The fretful ghosts of Soul and Mind.
Nay, even despise the ageless joys
Of lovely Sights, enchanting Noise
And all sweet Tastes and Scents that creep
Through Brain to Spirit. Alone we'll keep
(Since ours is the one certain bliss
To come together in a kiss)
Locked in our frail and narrow clutch
The world-creating sense of Touch.

All things are ours because we love.
Not Men nor wrathful Saints above,
Nor all the long, corroding Years,
Nor envious Death's dividing shears
Can ever vanquish or destroy
The sure possession of our joy.
Nay, God himself can ne'er retract
His gift of the accomplished Fact
Nor cancel by divine decree
Our once-enjoyed Eternity.

Then let us keep forever fresh
This warm Eternity of Flesh,
This only true reality
Of lip-to-lip and knee-to-knee,
Knowing that (whatever Years may bring
Of dusty Earth or golden Wing),
Once having loved, both You and I
Have been immortal ere we die.

LITERARY COMPETITIONS—49

SET BY JAMES BONE

A. We offer a First Prize of Two Guineas and a Second Prize of Half a Guinea for a rhymed Epitaph on either (1) the Empire Music Hall or (2) the Cheshire Cheese parrot, which has now been stuffed, after forty years of active service.

B. A woman goes to a sale at one of the London Stores and finds the goods in the provisions department have all been "marked down." (It is, of course, a dream.) We offer a First Prize of One Guinea and a Second Prize of Half a Guinea for the best suggestions of her conversation with the salesman.

RULES

i. All envelopes must be marked LITERARY, followed by the number of the Problem, in the top left-hand corner, and addressed to the Editor, The SATURDAY REVIEW, 9 King Street, London, W.C.2 (e.g., this week's LITERARY 49A, or LITERARY 49B).

ii. Typescript is not essential, provided the writing is legible, but competitors must use one side of the paper only. Pen-names may be employed if desired.

iii. Where a word limit is set, every fifty words must be marked off by competitors on their MSS.

iv. The Editor's decision is final. He reserves to himself the right to print in part or in whole any matter sent in for competition, whether successful or not. MSS. cannot be returned. Competitors failing to comply with any of these rules will be disqualified. Should the entries submitted be adjudged undeserving of award the Editor reserves the right to withhold a prize or prizes.

Entries must reach the Editor, addressed according to the rules, not later than by the first post on Monday, February 14, 1927. The results will be announced in the issue of the SATURDAY REVIEW immediately following. Neither the Editor nor the setter of the Competitions can enter into any correspondence with competitors.

RESULTS OF COMPETITIONS 47

SET BY HUMBERT WOLFE

A. We offer a First Prize of Two Guineas and a Second Prize of Half a Guinea for a poem in not more than 20 lines on "The Nightingale," in which there is no reference, direct or by implication, to mythology, the moon, trees or parts of trees, and from which the words "Philomel," "love," "passion," "night," "desire" and "memory" are excluded.

B. We offer a First Prize of One Guinea and a Second Prize of Half a Guinea for a letter from Elizabeth Darcy to her aunt, Mrs. Gardiner, describing in not more than 250 words the conduct of one Sairey Gamp, who had been engaged to nurse Lydia Wickham on the occasion of the birth of her first child.

REPORT

47A. To award the prizes is a task of no little difficulty in view of an unusually large number of entries and of the high level attained by quite a score of competitors.

A good many of those who competed, however, put themselves out of the running by shirking the difficulties. For example, Gordon Daviot, who submitted some excellent lines, wrote not of the bird but of a mare named "The Nightingale." While we deplore his evasion of the test, we cannot refrain from quoting :

Daintily, oh! daintily
She steps across the shaven sward,
Aloof but conscious, secretly
Savouring the crowd's regard,
The turning heads, the murmuring,
That greet the finished loveliness
Which men have agonized to bring
To this most proud of princesses.

Other competitors remembered that Jenny Lind had a nickname and made play with the likelihood of it

being bestowed on the next favourite of the concert stage. Others again were too conventional, too reminiscent of Matthew Arnold, or too cheaply facetious about the rhapsodies of other poets.

The First Prize goes to Poetaster, who has shown much skill in importing cynicism into verses which yet keep a certain wistfulness for the ear. There, indeed, is intelligence in the choice and management of metre and rhyme-scheme. The Second Prize is won by Lukotharses. His title is much the best part of his poem, but he too has shown judgment in regard to form. Will these two competitors kindly send their addresses to the Editor?

Commendation is due to H. A. Colquhoun, whose fancies are pretty if not very convincing; to J. M., who achieves some poetry, though his poem is about Provence rather than about the nightingale; to Elisabeth Cuming, who has had the promising idea of contrasting the actual with the more intensely real nightingale of Keats; to Charlotte Hoskins; to Muriel Pinch, who submits two entries; to D. U. G., who, however, has written of nostalgia rather than of the bird; to Midory; to Lester Ralph, less adroit than usual; to H. C. M., who reveals a pleasant humour in three entries, and has this (we hope not libellous) recollection of Sir Owen Seaman's attitude towards the brown, bright nightingale amorous:

Years since, when I was up at Clare,
And nightingales were nesting there,
O. S., then captain of the Boats,
Was so distracted by their notes,
Which spoiled his sleep and vexed his soul,
He used to pelt the things with coal.

There are gleams of humour also in the entries by J. B.; Quisquis, who writes in Cockney dialect; and F. Beresford, who is ingenious in rhyme.

We print the winning poems below:

THE WINNING ENTRY

Everything sleeping, out there in the dark, but you
and your small, sweet voice.
Can she hear you? She does not answer, or come to
her little brown lover.
If she came, would you still be singing, piping
"Rejoice! Rejoice!"
Or does the song go dumb when the waiting and
longing are over?

We, in our youth, we sing, we woo the magical
maiden;
We in our age are dumb, for *she came to us when
we sang*.
If we were still bereft of her, could dream her
enchantment-laden,
Would not the old be singing, till the jeering
twilight rang?

Fool, to babble of man and his dream to one little
bird in song!
You would not grieve if she never came, or die if
she went her ways.
Less than nothing you know of us and our life that
is all too long.
When once the singing is over, and only the answer
stays.

POETASTER

SECOND PRIZE

TO A NIGHTINGALE IN REDUCED CIRCUMSTANCES

AN UNILLUMINATED ADDRESS

Small brown bird
Of unexciting appearance,
Exemplary domesticity,
Extensive travels,
And a certain virtuosity in music,
Men like you less
For your modest costume,
Domestic virtues,
Judicious migrations,
And vocal pyrotechnics
Than for the noises

Which the poets have made
When thinking about you;
Was it well done, then,
To rob you of your magic,
Set you behind bars
In a haberdasher's window,
And bid you sing?

LUKOTHARSES

We also print H. A. Colquhoun's verses:

Faint and far, across the dusk
Notes of ambergris and musk
Meet and mingle, soaring higher
Through carnation and sweet-briar
Down to meadow-sweet and lime,
Marjoram and mint and thyme.

Azure blue of summer seas,
Violet-veined embroideries,
Shot with gold and Tyrian dye
—Three bright stars athwart the sky
Silver-grey—then, sweet and shrill,
Saffron, primrose, daffodil.

Sapphire, lapis lazuli,
Amethyst and porphyry,
Turquoise, opal flushed with light,
Topaz, amber, chrysolite,
Thus, and thus, till stars grow pale
Sings to me the nightingale.

H. A. COLQUHOUN

47B. Few and poor must be the verdict on entries for this competition. With but one or two exceptions, and those doubtful, competitors have been content to make only the most obvious points. Seeing that the competition was one which seemed to offer great opportunities for writers with a feeling for character and a sense of humour, the results are very disappointing. The First Prize goes to Nyamok. Miss Grierson and Miss Geddes deserve mild commendation; but we are unable to award the Second Prize, and there is no fourth competitor who has merited even a moment's consideration. We must exhort those who enter for such competitions to make an effort to get into the skin of the character supposed to be writing, and not to be satisfied with catching up a few stock phrases.

THE WINNING ENTRY

FROM MRS. DARCY TO MRS. GARDINER

By this time, my dearest Aunt, you will have received my hurried letter.

I reached Lydia's lodgings late last night. She seems to me sadly placed. Her husband absents himself as much as possible, and her landlady is less than civil. The care of my poor sister has been left entirely to the hired nurse, a stout and high-coloured woman, for whom I conceived an immediate dislike. When I saw her, I suspected her of being in liquor, which made me uneasy for Lydia's safety. On my taxing her with this, she became abusive, declared she was unaccustomed to have spies over her, and that "she would not demean herself to be interfered with by Bragian Venuges." (I cannot fully understand her expressions.) I replied she had widely mistaken my character if she imagined I could put up with intemperance. She then became very loud and voluble, and replied: "Meek as Mojes I may not be, but knowing what's due to me as Nuss and likeways as Mother, which few there is in this furnace of affliction can speak of with such a feelin' art, to be impeded upon I will not bear!" She repeatedly referred to a Mrs. Harris as a witness to her sobriety, but when I pressed for her address, it was not forthcoming.

In the end I had a hackney-coach called, paid her charges, and obliged her to leave. Happily the child thrives well, and Lydia's spirits are as usual irrepressible.

I will write further to-morrow.

Yours, etc.,

ELIZABETH DARCY

NYAMOK

BACK NUMBERS—IX

IT is no more than twenty-seven years since Ruskin died, but he has receded into a period far more remote. He dates more than almost any other Victorian; dates by reason of temper and method alike. The prophetic attitude, the multifariousness, the volubility of the writer are utterly alien to us. Once upon a time he was the greatest of art critics, and to us it seems that the nature of art criticism was then wholly misunderstood. He is still, as he always must be, among the greatest masters of English prose, but we cannot be happy with the prose that enthralled a whole generation.

* * *

For one thing, we are not able to allow him the honour he had as a pioneer, as the inventor of "word-painting." Quite when that claim was first challenged I do not know, but on the morrow of his death the SATURDAY REVIEW was protesting that Leigh Hunt, for one, had been before him, and citing the passage in which Hunt described the "mud shine" in front of a London theatre at night. And my predecessor was also disposed to dispute the claim that he was unique in his copiousness, the rival suggested being Swinburne, who, however, was described as arriving at copiousness in the quest for emphasis while Ruskin attained it, was forced into it, by wealth of ideas and impatience.

* * *

Wealth, all the same, is not quite the word, and the critic of that day knew it. He called in Matthew Arnold to demonstrate how vastly the ideas which crowded in on Ruskin varied in worth, how he who could be so wonderful when describing mountain scenery could be so ridiculous when he was contending that "Hamlet is no doubt in some way connected with 'homely,' the entire event of the tragedy turning on betrayal of home duty."

* * *

That is part of the trouble with Ruskin. A writer is welcome to have fads, whims, prejudices, notions about matters into which he has inquired hardly at all, and not a few good essayists have little else. But we must require of him that he shall know when he is propounding a serious theory and when he is merely indulging a caprice. Ruskin loved justice and in his own generous way laboured to establish it in our economic life, but as a critic he was constitutionally incapable of being just. The mind that he exposes to the experience of beauty in art is exquisitely sensitive to many, though by no means to all, forms of beauty, but it is without patience or humility, and the experience is not complete before he is off to expound it in one of his marvellous harangues.

* * *

In 1900 we thought to differentiate him from De Quincey by saying that there was a great character behind his work, and added that "mere mental acumen, even when accompanied by great exquisiteness of phrase, does not seem to lead posterity captive in the fullest sense." But surely what is wrong with De Quincey is his insecurity. Aiming so often at immediate effect, he writes with little care for the effect of the whole, sometimes without any sense of direction, and he has no idea of when to leave off. It is a prose of purple patches, issuing from a fitful and collapsing mind. Ruskin has any

number of purposes, but he has this much in common with De Quincey, that he can be diverted from his true course, though not by the enticement of fine phrases.

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As the Saturday Reviewer of 1900 remarked, there is no preciousness in Ruskin. In 1900 it was natural to bring in Stevenson, and it was reasonable enough to contrast Ruskin's choice of descriptive epithets with Stevenson's. Assuredly Ruskin never wrote anything open to the mild reproach we inflict on Stevenson when we read in 'Treasure Island' of "the quick fishes" darting to and fro over drowned men, or the sterner rebuke we address to the essayist who, wishing to say that a man may lie by silence, declared he might do so without "opening his teeth."

* * *

It used to be said—but what was not said of Ruskin?—that his prose was poetic. That is exactly what it is not. It is without the concision, the simplicity, the suggestiveness of poetry, in substitution for which it offers an almost incomparable eloquence. No one fit to hear poetry at all can ever tire of it; but of eloquence it is indeed possible to grow weary, and for myself I must confess that I do not return often to Ruskin, any more than to De Quincey. I cannot imagine how anyone can be an habitual reader of either. Of Landor, yes; for though there are many pages of his prose which are chilling, there is refreshment in the amplitude and firmness and grave charm of that marmoreal work. Not less unbalanced in himself than Ruskin was, Landor for the most part kept his fretfulness out of his prose, as Ruskin did not.

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Ruskin, we were told by the late Frederic Harrison in a book issued a few days before the prophet's death, did for Turner what Carlyle did for Cromwell. It was incidental, however, to the much wider achievement of making art in the good sense popular, of setting a really large public talking about pictures and architecture as things of vital concern to the ordinary citizen. He preached wisdom and folly in successive breaths, but the stimulus he gave to the aesthetic conscience of his age was immense, and presently he became someone against whom it was worth while to rebel. That is one of the services that prophets render us. When we have benefited by their wisdom we have energy enough to stone them. Is there anyone to stone to-day?

* * *

Authority is needed in matters of art if only that it may be defied in a wholesome revolt. There has been none since the great Victorians passed away. We are all rebels now, and it is in vain that any man thinks to stand solitary against the world; there is no solid body of opinion to challenge. Ruskin has had no successors. Nor has his prose had any imitators, the copiousness of it being imitable only by a mind as overflowing as his own, and no one being likely to take sentences of six hundred words (there is a Ruskinian sentence of 619) as models. His collected works are depressing to contemplate, and we shall read him in bulk less and less frequently, but we shall remember that the world we live in would have been different if his far-reaching and agitating influence had never been exercised. Whatever his place in a history of literature, he has a peculiar place in the history of sensibility to nature and art.

STET.

Reviews

DANIEL DEFOE

BY EDWARD SHANKS

A Journal of the Plague Year. By Daniel Defoe. Constable. 21s.

DEFOE might make almost as good a text as any man who has come after him for an examination into the moral aspect of presenting fiction as though it were truth. I quoted here not so long ago the old sea captain who, after reading 'Gulliver's Travels,' remarked that he knew Captain Gulliver well enough, but that he resided in Rotherhithe, not in Wapping. Apparently (for the anecdotal history of literature abounds in instances) the wildest traveller's tale will always find some such believer, just as the most veracious will always meet with questioning somewhere. It can hardly be maintained, however, that Swift intended any serious imposition on human credulity.

But with Defoe the question is rather different. Are his books, 'Robinson Crusoe,' and 'Memoirs of a Cavalier' and the 'Journal of the Plague Year' to be regarded wholly or partly as impostures? Was he our first novelist or our first sensational journalist? The sober and honest saddler who purports to write the 'Journal' has the effrontery to observe on his first page that "we had no such thing as printed newspapers in those days, to spread rumours and reports of things, and to improve them by the invention of men, as I have lived to see practised since." But he is himself as much of an invention as any diarist who ever in these latter days has pretended to be privy to the secrets of the great, and his narrative was first issued by Defoe with as much obvious intent to deceive. We may take it, I think, without much hesitation, that the average reader of 1722 would accept this work in good faith as being what it was described to be, an account of the Great Plague "written by a Citizen who continued all the while in London." Similarly he would accept the 'Memoirs of a Cavalier' as being really that. And I think we may go a little further and say that he would have been very angry if he had discovered that these books were fictions and would have wanted his money back.

We may perhaps pass over the moral question on the ground that if the worthy reader was deceived it was into the reading of excellent novels, and possibly we can excuse Defoe's own turpitude on the ground that he hardly knew what to do to bring the modern realistic novel to birth. But it is a curious thing that the latest prodigy of literature should have come into existence in such a dubious and hugger-mugger fashion. For if Defoe really did wish to introduce the realistic novel to a public which did not dream of it and would have had nothing to do with it under its true guise, the desire was obscure and instinctive: he was writing in the first place for his market.

But his obscure and instinctive genius led him to a remarkable result. As a rule the "faked" narrative can avoid betraying itself only at the cost of being excessively dull. Truth may be often stranger than fiction, but when fiction attempts to emulate that strangeness it commonly gives itself away: the marvellous things of life have their veracity stamped on them in a manner which the romancer has never learnt to counterfeit. Dullness is, however, a very safe disguise for mendacity. The account of Formosa, by George Psalmanazar, on a recent reprint of which I wrote here a few weeks ago, is as wildly removed from truth as Cyrano de Bergerac's relation of his visit to the moon, but it is boring enough to compel belief. No man, one feels, could be at the pains of inventing stuff so flat.

Defoe carefully avoids the marvellous: his genius lies in imparting interest to the matter-of-fact and expected. The strongest fascination of Robinson Crusoe's island does not really lie in the strangeness of his position, but in the details of his housekeeping, in his little ingenuities and makeshifts. So the opening of this book is as little apocalyptic as a consular report. The saddler writes:

Then we were easy again for about six weeks, when, none having died with any marks of infection, it was said the temper was gone; but after that, I think it was about the 12th of February, another died in another house, but in the same parish and in the same manner.

This turned the people's eyes pretty much towards that end of the town; and the weekly bills showing an increase of burials in St. Giles's parish more than usual, it began to be suspected that the plague was among the people at that end of the town; and that many had died of it, though they had taken care to keep it as much from the knowledge of the public as possible. This possessed the heads of the people very much, and few cared to go through Drury Lane, or the other streets suspected, unless they had extraordinary business that obliged them to it.

This is the manner in which Defoe not only obtains our belief, but also, what is more important, awakens our interest. There follow statistics—quite a lot of them. And so, by the time we reach the wilder parts of the tale (still as soberly told and still as plentifully illustrated by statistics) we are in that state of engrossment which is induced by the narrative of any remarkable event by any eye-witness who persuades us that he is more interested in his facts than in the effect he is making.

Where did Defoe's interest actually lie? Partly, of course, in giving his public a book it would buy: he was a professional maker of books. But he was not only that. He desired, as in his other writings, to inculcate moral lessons, and it was also in his mind, I think, to put forward certain ideas of his own on the proper way of dealing with the plague, which could not be regarded in 1722 as a wholly vanished danger. Some of his observations on this point are interesting in the light of modern medical science, as are his theories of the origin and nature of the disease. There is a wild prevision of the germ theory:

I have heard it was the opinion of others [he says] that it might be distinguished by the party's breathing upon a piece of glass, where, the breath condensing, there might living creatures be seen by a microscope of strange, monstrous and frightful shapes, such as dragons, snakes, serpents, and devils, horrible to behold.

But the saddler doubted this very much and, besides, had no microscope to make the test with.

CHARLES I: THE LAST PHASE

Charles I in Captivity. Edited, from contemporary accounts, by Gertrude Scott Stevenson. Arrowsmith. 15s.

MISS STEVENSON hastens to disclaim any intention of adding to "the growing library of slap-dash historical memoirs." Her book, indeed, is a mere reprint of contemporary records relating to the captivity and execution of Charles I. She gives us the whole of Herbert's 'Threnodia Carolina'—an excellent thing to have done, for this invaluable account of the last two years of Charles's life, written by one who was his personal attendant throughout that period, has apparently never been reprinted since its first publication by command of Charles II. She adds the evidence of two Cromwellian officers, Major Huntington and Colonel Edward Cooke; Firebrace's story of Charles's attempts to escape from Carisbrooke Castle; and the official version of the King's trial, published by authority of Parliament, for which she seems to have gone to H. L. Stephens's 'State Trials,' published in 1899.

So far so good. But there is always the introduction; and for all her professions of impartiality, and her evident desire to preserve the balance in a quarrel not settled even yet, it is surprising how many controversial statements Miss Stevenson has managed to squeeze into her brief introductory remarks. In her anxiety to avoid "whitewash," she asserts that "his [the king's] appearance was unattractive." It was, perhaps, unlucky that such an opinion should appear in print at the very moment when the Flemish pictures were on view at Burlington House. It is a question between her and van Dyck; and the latter has the advantage, both as a judge of beauty and as a witness of the facts. On the other hand she excuses the desertion of Strafford, finding it "difficult to see what he [the king] could have done." Charles, however, blamed himself bitterly for it, mentioning the matter even on his scaffold. Here it is a question between Miss Stevenson and the king, and most people will probably agree with the latter. The old trick of calling it "obstinacy" whenever Charles stuck to a point, and "weakness" (not "statesmanship") whenever he yielded one, is reminiscent of the school of Whig historians who were determined to blame the unfortunate monarch, whether he said "Yea" or "Nay." It is certainly not impartiality—nor is the equally out-of-date description of Laud as "a narrow-minded religious fanatic." "The sphere of history," says Miss Stevenson, "is simply to record the events of the world's progress, and to give a faithful picture of the persons who took part in these events." But it is astonishing how differently these events can be made to appear in the hands of different recorders, and how varied are the "faithful pictures" thus produced.

However, this is not so much a review of Miss Stevenson's work as of Sir Thomas Herbert's. Herbert received his appointment, as the king's personal attendant in captivity, from Parliament; but he seems very quickly to have fallen under the spell of a personality which Miss Stevenson would have us believe was "rude and unapproachable" and of "little charm." If he was not immediately taken into the king's confidence, he was equally distrusted by the Army, with the result that, in the earlier stages of his narrative, he is often ill-informed. But soon a real affection sprang up between the two men. It was impossible not to admire Charles's courage and patience in adversity (he was naturally an irascible man), his magnanimity towards his enemies, whom he freely forgave ("and I thank God I have a heart to do it," he wrote to his son), his honesty in sticking to his principles and his religion, and refusing to save his life, as he probably could have

done, by making promises which he never meant to keep. Nor should his intellectual qualities be forgotten. We recognize him now for one of the greatest art connoisseurs this country has produced. He was also a writer of ability, and no mean critic of literature and theology. Though he was a halting speaker and refused legal advice, he scored point after point against Bradshaw at his trial; even the "official version" cannot disguise the fact that he had all the better of the dispute.

But it was probably the pathos of his loneliness that appealed to Herbert's gentle heart. From the moment when the king started on that last journey to Windsor, a prisoner in the hands of the army, Herbert's rather dull and flagging narrative takes on a new lease of life. It acquires a "human" as well as an historical interest. With sure yet unstudied effect it proceeds through each successive stage of the tragedy to that final scene at Whitehall, with Herbert cowering behind one of the windows of the Banqueting Hall, listening for the sound of the fatal blow which he could not bear to see.

It is a sound that still reverberates through the centuries. It still divides mankind into opposing camps. It is distinguished above other great events by the fact that every actor "upon that memorable scene" seems to have been instinctively aware of its significance. "This is not a slight thing you are about," cried the king to his judges. And Harrison, the regicide, on trial for his life in 1660, used these eloquent words:

My lords, the matter that hath been offered to you, as it was touched, was not a thing done in a corner. I believe the sound of it hath been in most nations. I believe the hearts of some have felt the terrors of that presence of God that was with His servants in those days.

No, it was one of the great deeds of history, and, right or wrong, it was certainly not done in a corner. The contemporary documents in which it is recorded are among the most poignant and moving ever written. They are worth whole libraries of modern commentary, and Miss Stevenson has done well to reprint a few of them in this convenient form.

THE EDITOR AS ARTIST

The Diary of A. C. Benson. Edited by Percy Lubbock. Hutchinson. 24s.

A RTHUR CHRISTOPHER BENSON was a failure in literature: Mr. Lubbock has enabled him to achieve posthumously his one success. Certain obvious differences apart, the case is analogous to that of John Addington Symonds, an even more vivid and versatile creature, who, producing with an almost equal facility, never succeeded in conveying through literature to the public the qualities which made him so stimulating a companion to some of the choicest spirits of his day. What the late Horatio Brown did for Symonds, that and more Mr. Percy Lubbock has done for Benson. More, we say, because Mr. Lubbock's task was harder. However Symonds, outside his autobiographical papers and letters, fell short in expression of his essential self, he did not present the public with a false likeness, whereas Benson, in those relaxed meditative books of his, depicted himself as a vaguely sweet and solemn person, mooning about in some dim region on the borders of aesthetics and religion for the delectation of such readers as like to have the illusion of thinking high thoughts without the pain of thinking anything in particular. The discrepancy between such a being and the real Benson was plain enough to himself. "In my books," we find him writing in his diary, "I am solemn, sweet, refined; in real life I am rather vehement, sharp, contemptuous, a busy mocker."

Now, assuming candour in the diarist, it might seem

easy enough to correct the false picture. But Benson, when he turned to his diary, did so in hours of reaction. All day he might have been busy, interested, full of zest in talk among congenial friends, but in the diary, very often, there would be the expression of lassitude, irritation, petulance, with a certain cruelty in touching off the foibles of companions to whom he was truly and even tenderly attached. Any but the most judicious use of the material would have resulted in nothing more than the substitution of an interesting caricature for a falsely idealistic portrait. The immense mass of the material, contained in no fewer than one hundred and eighty volumes and aggregating four million words, necessitated drastic excision, and duty to truth required an exquisite skill in choosing passages for publication which would not destroy balance in the portrait. Mr. Lubbock has succeeded in producing out of the diaries of his friend a volume of no more than three hundred pages which reveals the man as not one of the books he wrote for the public did. It is a triumph of editing which, though it will disconcert most of Benson's public, must receive the most cordial applause of the discerning.

The case of Benson is worth noticing as a warning against the easy assumption that any writer with a command of his medium can project his whole personality through his work. Though he wrote too much, Benson could write; but as soon as he took pen in hand for the public, all the more pungent and significant part of himself evaporated, and this acute observer, this sympathetic and yet impatient critic of men and causes and books, became a whisperer of graceful platitudes. Now and then he felt complacency at the size of the public that welcomed his essays and stories, but far oftener he was annoyed by the vision of what he himself called "a priggish, sentimental, solemn, ineffective public," meekly absorbing the diluted thought he offered it. "They say," and "they" were not his habitual readers, "I write for Suburbia, and it is partly true." A critic remarks of one of his later books that it is as if one child boasted to another of having had the worse attack of measles, and Benson is ruefully amused by the truth of the criticism. But he continues to work for a despised public, without any commercial motive. The real Benson remains unexpressed, simply because, with all his real skill in writing, the author can put into literature only the least characteristic part of himself.

Many reasons may be advanced in explanation of Benson's failure as a writer. He wrote too much, and too often without the compulsion which comes from a precisely defined subject; he was too introspective, without energy in the adventure of discovering the secrets of his own nature; he was probably hampered now and then by consciousness of family and academic obligations; for a long time he was the victim of a very obscure form of neurasthenia; he turned too often to literature as a mere refuge from affairs. But we may take it that the two chief causes of his failure were his lack of an intellectual centre and his inability to realize that a sense of futility may be a literary asset. Few men have more abounded in opinions than Benson, but they were ingeniously extemporized in literary or other debate, and Mr. Lubbock admits inability to discover the central principles of his intellectual life. He had among other gifts a real vein of poetry, but here we may compare him with another Eton master. Cory thought himself a failure, as perhaps in some ways he was, but it is the sense of failure that makes the success of 'Ionica,' giving Cory his small, permanent place among English poets. Benson's wistfulness never issued in any concentrated work of art, remained a misty thing, uncomfortable to himself and to us. By an odd choice he wrote volumes of criticism about Rossetti and Walter Pater, sympathetic,

judicious, nicely phrased books, which nowhere go to the core of their subjects, and never understood that both were men who knew decisively what of themselves to put into literature and how to achieve what Rossetti called "arduous fulness" in its expression.

The books which gave Benson his popularity will presumably go on selling for years yet, but they are destined to oblivion. His personality is worthy of remembrance, and thanks to the piety, judgment, patience and skill with which Mr. Lubbock has made a book, not a mere hotch-potch of reminiscences, out of his diaries it seems likely to have a place in men's minds when those who knew and loved the man at Eton and Cambridge have passed away. The art with which he has coaxed fragmentary and contradictory confessions into a revealing portrait of his friend entitles Mr. Lubbock to a position among the very few who have successfully practised the hardest kind of biography, that in which the subject is made to speak for himself.

THE TUAREGS

People of the Veil. By Francis Rennell Rodd. Macmillan. 30s.

THAT there exists, somewhere in the middle of the Sahara Desert, a mysterious nomadic tribe, whose men, though fierce warriors and slave-raiders, go modestly veiled, as women do in other Moslem countries, while their women are unveiled and are allowed a licence only paralleled in Western civilization, is a fact that has by now become familiar even to readers of penny novelettes and the spectators at "sheik" films. There is something about the tall, swathed figure of the Tuareg warrior, with his sinister eyes glinting out at us, that has an almost too obvious popular appeal. Yet the truth is that we have learned very little new about him in this country since the publication of Barth's well-known work in 1857. It is doubtful whether the average Englishman is even aware of the last tragic chapter in Tuareg history—the futile rebellion against the French in 1917. That revolt was put down with a severity which, Mr. Rodd tells us, many Frenchmen on the spot regret. If so, it was in striking contrast to our own mild treatment of the Senoussi tribesmen further west, who rose against us about the same time, inspired by the same false promises from Constantinople and Berlin.

Mr. Rodd's book is the result of a sojourn of about six months with the Tuaregs of Air in the year 1922. He started out from Nigeria with Captain Angus Buchanan—who needs no introduction to the reading public—but was unable to accompany that intrepid traveller all the way to the Mediterranean coast owing to lack of time. He therefore contented himself with the Tuaregs of Air Oasis, and, as far as they are concerned, his more solid and informing work makes an admirable supplement to Captain Buchanan's livelier travel narrative. Mr. Rodd stayed long enough in Air to acquire a fair knowledge of the language and to gain the confidence of the people. He discovered that in this topsy-turvy Moslem land the men do all the sewing—which perhaps explains the Tuareg fashion of extreme plainness in dress. On the other hand the women are the cooks, and, according to Mr. Rodd, they are very bad ones too. The sexes mix freely, and public morals seem to be none the worse for it. There is no "suffragette" movement, however; government is indisputably in the hands of the males; but the authority of the tribal chiefs is rapidly declining, and this may prove a serious problem for the French in the near future. Mr. Rodd found the Tuaregs an unusually well-mannered race; even the boys and the dogs were generally friendly to visitors. Of the

"blue-eyed" Tuaregs of legend he could discover no trace. On the contrary, he noted an unusual darkness of complexion, which he thinks "is accentuated by the prize set upon indigo clothing, which is so impregnated with dye that it wears off on the skin of the proud owner, whose ablutions are conspicuously infrequent."

These are only a few observations taken at random from a book which materially advances our knowledge of one of the most interesting tribes of North Africa. There is a thoroughness about Mr. Rodd's methods which inspires confidence, and creates an interest which he makes no attempt to awaken by any artifices of style.

A NEW ART?

Colour-Music, The Art of Light. By Adrian Bernard Klein. Crosby Lockwood. 36s.

IT was inevitable that, directly the development of optical science and of electric lighting made the projection of light upon a given plane the simplest of matters, some attempt would be made to create out of this possibility a form of artistic expression. The idea itself is not, indeed, a new one. Various inquirers into the workings of the human mind have attempted to ascertain what are the effective qualities of the various colours which make up the spectrum. Primitive mechanisms were constructed, which raised discs of various colours, but these were clearly toys too childish to be taken seriously by themselves, and an attempt was made to co-operate some system of colour with the accepted system of musical notation, on the hypothesis that the visible stimulus of colour would in some way strengthen the audible stimulus of sound. This division of the spectrum into twelve parts to match the twelve notes of the octave is manifestly absurd. The theorists, who adopted this line of thought, cannot have been true musicians, or they would have realized that music requires no allies; they are, indeed, always a hindrance rather than a help to the listener—witness the attempt made to explain the music of one of Joseph Holbrooke's works by throwing on a magic-lantern screen the verses of the poem upon which the music was supposed to be based.

It is, however, an indisputable fact that, quite apart from the metaphorical use of terms derived from Light and Colour—we talk, for example, of "bright" keys and "sombre" orchestration—there are many people who find a quite definite analogy between music and colour. The Russian composers Rimsky-Korsakov and Scriabin have both left a record of their colour-reactions to various keys. But unfortunately neither they nor any other two persons will agree entirely upon a system of colours to fit different keys. Thus Scriabin calls the key of C "red" and the key of F sharp "bright blue" or, according to another account, "violet," while M. Koussevitsky, Scriabin's finest interpreter, exclaims dogmatically: "Surely for everyone sunlight is C major and cold colours (here we have a metaphor from another sphere of physics!) are minors. And F sharp is decidedly strawberry red!" We seem to detect a "shimmer of moonshine," Scriabin's colour for the key of B, about this kind of talk. The matter is further complicated by the fact that the *timbres* of various orchestral instruments suggest various colours to different subjects. It will be clear that association plays some part in these analogies, when we point out that to Lavingne the tone of the horn suggests "yellow, a brilliant copper yellow," while to Raff it is "Hunter's green to brown." There seems to be no possibility of a real agreement upon a definite system of colours to match the system of keys or the various instruments.

However, the latest experimenters in the "art of light"—and Mr. Klein is among them—have thrown over the association of colour with music, whether already existing or specially written, like Scriabin's "Prometheus," for performance with a colour-instrument. They believe that an art of colour can be created, which will be independent of the other arts, even as music is. Hitherto colour has been used for artistic purposes, either in connexion with the graphic representation of forms, or for the decoration of textiles, pottery and so on. We may leave aside the not very convincing or successful attempts of "abstract" painters. But in all these things colour is static. Mr. Klein wants it to be mobile, like music. He has invented a machine—and there are various other inventions for achieving similar results—to throw upon a wall or screen, colours which can be controlled as to movement and hue by the operator. It is difficult to realize what exactly would be the effect of this "new" art without experiencing it.

Mr. Klein's book is an interesting and a valuable record of the various experiments which have been made towards the creation of an art of light, even though one fears that they must in the end be abortive. He states his case, moreover, temperately, apart from some rather stupid abuse of the art of painting, and, in spite of numerous scientific terms and tables (all of which we do not pretend to have understood), the book is very readable. The most valuable part, so it seems to us, is that which deals with the application of this art of light to theatrical production. For the Schwabe-Hasait system of illumination is only another of these "colour-organs," and it is as an applied rather than as an absolute art, that light is most likely to be of use for aesthetic purposes.

A THEOLOGIAN OF CRICKET

Those Ashes. By M. A. Noble. Cassell. 15s.

M. R. NOBLE'S knowledge of the best cricket, though, to be sure, he never even saw Spofforth bowl, let alone batted against him, is more extensive than that of most living men. His new book is in general scheme severely devoted to the last Australian tour in England, but it is only natural that there should be a good many informative and reminiscent asides in it. Of these, the following is perhaps the most interesting:

Directly behind the bowler's arm [at Bristol] was an old wooden stand on which the County Club allowed a number of advertisements to be displayed. "W. G." disapproved of this, very strongly, in fact, and he asked that they should be removed, saying that it wasn't cricket to adopt such methods. His request was refused. He was not by any means silenced, and he frequently repeated his demand without success. "All right," he said to the committee, in an ultimatum, "if they are not taken down I cease to play with the county because these advertisements are contrary to the spirit of the game." Not even the prospect of losing the services of the world's greatest player worried the committee. They stuck to their decision and "W. G." left the ground and never played again for Gloucestershire.

Mr. Noble, who gives Mr. S. M. J. Woods as his authority for this story, describes it with justice as "highly interesting" and adds that he has "often wondered, probably with thousands of others, why 'W. G.' really broke away from his home county." To say "thousands" is probably an understatement, and this new light is interesting, even if it does no more than arouse controversy, which may lead to an establishment of historical fact. The "Memorial Biography" of Grace, a well-intentioned and decorous compilation, quotes the statesmanlike deduction made by the current "Wisden" from the fact that he did not play for the county after May, 1899. "Wisden" assumed that his "connexion with the

county has finally ceased" and on this the biography remarks, in its muffled way, that "nothing further is required for the purpose of this biography except to mention that he himself never displayed the slightest ill-will about the matter."

There is, perhaps, a good deal more to be said about this suggested explanation. One might inquire whether any number of advertisements behind the bowler's arm at Bristol can be more opposed to the spirit of the game than faces of members of the M.C.C. at Lord's. But Mr. Noble's evident delight in the story is highly characteristic of him. If he had not distinguished himself as a fine all-rounder and an even finer strategist, he might have held an eminent position in the history of the game as, if the expression may be allowed, its greatest theologian, combining, like St. Thomas Aquinas, deep learning and subtle powers of analysis with a flaming faith.

This day-by-day commentary on the doings of Mr. Collins's team contains much of very great value on the technical side. Mr. Noble occasionally abstains from criticism where one would have liked to have known what he thought. He speaks severely of the original choice of the Australian team, but he says nothing of the selection from that team of the elevens for the Test matches. His opinion on the omission of Mr. J. M. Taylor, at Manchester, and again at the Oval, might be interesting. These silences, which may not of course be deliberate, do not prevent him from giving immensely instructive criticisms on the details of all the games in which the Australians took part.

But the most striking part of what he has to say will be found by many readers in his incidental observations on sportsmanship. Here is a typical example—from the account of the Sussex match:

There were two very sporting incidents during the day. Gilligan appealed for I.b.w. against Bardsley—one of those instinctive appeals which are made before the bowler realizes his error. Gilligan instantly turned and said: "Sorry, not out." The umpire was raising his hand in the affirmative, but he at once altered his decision, giving it "not out." Oldfield was caught very low down in the slips by Bowley. There was a doubt about it and a pause. Oldfield turned and said, "Did you catch it, Ted?" Bowley replied, "Yes, Bertie," and Oldfield instantly walked away without waiting for any decision.

Mr. Noble does not indulge in fine writing, but the very simplicity of his narrative of such incidents communicates to the reader his very genuine delight in them.

It is clear that so far as sportsmanship is concerned, Mr. Noble has nothing to say against modern cricket. But from other points of view his account is not very reassuring. He speaks again and again of excessive timidity among the batsmen, especially against slow bowling. And the total achievement of Mr. Collins's side makes a gloomy spectacle. It created a record for an Australian side in England by going through the season with only one defeat. But it created another and much less creditable record by drawing no fewer than twenty-nine matches. It was able to win, in fact, against only nine first-class sides. A bad summer had something to do with this lamentable performance, but by no means enough to explain it entirely away.

THE WRITINGS OF HENRY JAMES

Henry James, Man and Author. By Pelham Edgar. Grant Richards. 12s. 6d.

WE do not gather that Mr. Edgar had any personal acquaintance with Henry James, and he rejects gossip or anecdote about him. As a matter of fact, when talking to children about themselves, or to cultivated adults about his own books, James

proved beyond the understanding of either. "Tantalizing complexity" is a phrase Mr. Edgar uses on his first page, and James's obscurity is a serious objection to readers. It arises mainly from his rage for subtle discriminations, often suggested in fragments of sentences. Mr. Edgar gives a clear view of his whole theory of writing. He shunned effects most artists are eager to grasp, and might have quoted in support of his deliberately roundabout methods Shakespeare's:

though indirect,
Yet indirection grows thereby direct.

An enthusiast for Balzac, he was not satisfied with his visit to France, and was rebuked by people he believed in for his use of French where English might suffice. Yet the French phrases continued, and the progress of the artist in style has been described as from James I to James II and the Old Pretender.

A book of this sort, however, should be written by an admirer above the depressing influence of mannerisms, and Mr. Edgar, admitting that a "literary sixth sense" is needed for James's advanced style, makes his way through the complexities with excellent powers of description and judgment. He has found a good arrangement of the extensive output in groups, and while he places some books very high, he criticizes others keenly. 'Daisy Miller,' in 1878, was the first really considerable performance. For the latter part of his life James was much more English than anything else, and though his fastidiousness received many shocks, he preferred to live with the English. But he produced unequalled pictures of Americans abroad, with their romantic belief in aristocracy, their free vulgarity, their agreeable "go" leading to mastery of situations, and hampering Puritanism. His book on 'The American Scene' is rightly appreciated here, and if he did not know the business man of dollars with any intimacy, that creature has long been copiously exhibited to us as the favourite hero or villain of American fiction. There is much to be said for 'The Bostonians' and 'The American,' which seem too simple to the elect. The minute corrections subsequently applied to the latter, of which three specimen pages are given by Mr. Edgar, show the overnice artist overrating style. 'The Awkward Age' embodies a capital scheme not quite adequately achieved, but 'The Spoils of Poynett' deserves all the praise awarded to it. Those who do not agree with Mr. Edgar about the mature masterpieces can always read his well-considered views with pleasure. Apart from the long novels, the shorter stories may well have a vivid appeal. They reveal James as a master of the supernatural and a cunning portrayer of the literary conscience.

At his best he was a first-rate master of English, but he pulls us up now and again with some fad, the use of the appealing "so" which Pater, another maker of elaborate prose, overdid, or a strange idiom like that which describes an ancient actress as living "in lodgings or whatever." In private life James could descend to the commonest vernacular, but it played little part in his books. He shunned the sheer crudities of existence. The tortures he described were all refined, and he left sexual crises to the imagination. He had no gift, as Mr. Edgar points out, for adventurous romance, and the motives he found for his denizens of sophisticated civilization are not always satisfying. But he had an admirable sense that civilization should mean some approach to perfection in manner and matter, not, in a happy phrase of his we recall, the "chatter and smatter" which occupies so many pens to-day, or the sloppy stuff proceeding from those who "bloom with a regularity." His letters show a pained surprise at the methods of other authors. His own was a little wilful, but Mr. Edgar easily refutes the overdrawn attacks on him in this thorough and attractive study.

FABLES

Krylov's Fables. Translated into English Verse by Bernard Pares. Cape. 7s. 6d.

MOST readers of Russian tales have heard of Krylov, the writer of fables, held in such affectionate regard by the novelists. He lived 1768-1844, but although always a literary man it was not until he was forty years old that he began to write fables. These are now translated into English verse for the first time by Sir Bernard Pares. "The Fables of Krylov," says the translator, "are a picture of the Russia of his time." It may be so, but it would have been interesting if he had indicated which fables are entirely the work of Krylov. There are dozens from Aesop, more from La Fontaine; it is likely that he adapted freely from other sources, and it cannot be said that he has the excuse of improving upon his originals. His version of 'The Lion and the Gnat' misses the marvellous irony of Aesop's, and that of 'The Lion in the Net and the Mouse' is much inferior. Many of the remainder deal with affairs from their peculiar Russian angle and have not the universal appeal, or the smack of the vernacular, that are the essence of a good fable.

The translation adheres closely to the original metres, and there is no more unmalable poetry in the world than Russian. It is possible to read some of these verses without grasping any meaning, so intricate is their framework. Somehow it seems native to the fable that it should be swift, simple and pithy, but in Krylov the opposite is the mode:

Miss Markey found her sight got weak as she grew older:
But human friends of hers had told her,
"That is a trouble which one very soon dispels;
You only need good spectacles."
She made a trip to town, where several pairs were sold her.

So meandering and diffuse a treatment is disintegrating; it may do very well in Russian, but you cannot write fables in English alexandrines. However, most lovers of Russian literature will be glad to have a complete collection of the Fables, and Sir Bernard deserves great praise for the patience and the art with which he has accomplished the tremendous difficulty of translation.

THE CURTAIN-RAISER

Twelve One-Acters. By John Pollock. The Cayme Press. 7s. 6d.

IN an interesting preface to his short plays Mr. Pollock states the case for dramatic brevity and complains, with justice, that the case has been neglected in England, while it has been studied and respected on the Continent with admirable results for actors and audience. There is virtually no place on our professional stage for the "one-acter," unless it is rough enough and obvious enough to be dubbed "a sketch"; then it has a possibility of life on "the halls," provided "a star" is willing to foster it with his or her own presence in the cast. As a result the short play has only a narrow footing in the English world of entertainment and no place at all in the English world of theatrical art. Mr. Pollock, however, does not sufficiently consider the amateur performer, from whose pockets the skilled contriver of brevities can draw a considerable income. Until a few years ago it is true that the amateur was perfectly content with frayed and time-worn pieces and with ordinary, easy little farces of no artistic value. But the temper of the amateur has altered of late and altered for the better; there is a genuine appetite for fresh work which has matter in its content and style in its execution. Accordingly Mr. Pollock's pessimism needs modification. The numerous amateur

groups and dramatic societies have varying levels of ambition and achievement, but the National Festival of the British Drama League, which this year attracted more than a hundred competing teams, has revealed intelligence and courageous choice of material and some renderings so competent that professional standards are challenged. In thus attempting to add to Mr. Pollock's estimate of the situation, one may recommend his volume of plays to the amateurs in search of new themes.

The scope of Mr. Pollock's work is wide. He is as much at home in rooms at Cambridge as on the banks of Vistula, in a circus-tent at Sheffield as in Hyde Park at midnight. His drama is usually compact of character and action and rightly so, for the one-act play cannot cope with argument. That may be one reason for its absence from the professional stage. The advanced English theatre, no doubt under Shavian influence, has been essentially argumentative and in twenty minutes a problem may be stated but not examined. Avoiding the discursive method Mr. Pollock deals with situations and surprises and shows a considerable adroitness in coming to a point quickly. He writes for the stage and for the player and not merely for the satisfaction of the literary critic. Thus the amateur group, desiring a change from the familiar facetiousness of Miss Gertrude Jennings, would do well to set this volume on its bookshelf and to take it down for use.

AN OLD VIRTUOSO

Memoires for my Grand-son. By John Evelyn. Transcribed and furnished with Preface and Notes by Geoffrey Keynes. Nonesuch Press. 10s. 6d.

HERE in a booklet produced with the elegance of the Nonesuch Press is the advice of Evelyn the Diarist at eighty-four to his grandson at twenty-two, which has lain for over 200 years unprinted in the library of Wotton House. The present representative of the family is now twenty-two, Mr. Keynes tells us, and can read in print a MS. which shows the failing hand of old age. Evelyn was gentleman, scholar, and Christian, and all three aspects of his character are exhibited here. He wishes his grandson to serve his country well; he fusses about the arrangements at Wotton; and, at a time when sermonizing was frequent and valued, he provides moral maxims for life. He thinks that little is to be learnt "by young people, but much by Antient," and his old age is full of caution. He was never, as Mr. Keynes hints, original or brilliant, but a sound and loyal man with unusual knowledge of trees and antiquities. His advice has none of the cynicism to be found in Raleigh's 'Instructions to his Sonne,' but both are anxious about the depredations of servants. Evelyn writes about preventing

all wast and Imbeziling whatsoever by Chare Women and pretended helpers who will otherwise insensibly incroch and are commonly introduc'd by idle and lazy servants.

He deprecates indulgence in field sports and London vanities, recommending chess and bowls. His nearest approach to an epigram is the maxim, "To abstain from sin when we cannot sin is to be forsaken of sins, not to forsake sins," which reminds us of Col. Hay's couplet:

Unto each man comes a day when his favourite sins all forsake him,
And he complacently thinks he has forsaken his sins.

Mr. Keynes has cleared up from the resources of his own library a reference to a family dispute and sensibly added notes about matters little known today. Is the "out" on pp. 44-5 miswritten for a "not" and influenced by the "without" which follows? As it stands, the passage is certainly odd.

NEW FICTION

BY L. P. HARTLEY

Moonraker. By F. Tennyson Jesse. Heinemann. 5s.

Adam in Moonshine. By J. B. Priestley. Heinemann. 7s. 6d.

Hallowmead Limited. By Vernon Rendall. Chapman and Hall. 7s. 6d.

THE *Moonraker* was a pirate ship:

Her bowsprit, with the jibboom and flying-jibboom, was the hell of a length, and it was steeved right up so that the tip of the flying-jibboom looked to be above her foreyard. She was painted black . . . and she flew the Jolly Roger from her spanker gaff when in action, just like the pirates in the story-books. Her lines were as sweet and her heart as sound as any vessel's afloat.

But handsome is as handsome does. How unkind ships can be to each other, how they love to lay bare each other's anatomy! When the *Moonraker* met the peaceful *Piskie* "a likely-looking brig, all white, with a sheer that made her look like a paring of the young moon" she "sent a cannon ball into the *Piskie's* main-mast, carrying away the yard and the port rigging, so that the whole raffle was banging about against the gaff of the spanker." Whatever this injury means, it sounds terrible; and soon the *Piskie*, for all that she had "a copper bottom as clean as a hound's tooth," was beneath the waves, and such of her crew as survived were prisoners on board the pirate. Among them was Jacky Jacka, who had done a kindness to a witch in Devonshire and then run away to sea. The captain liked him and gave him the job of cabin-boy. Jacky, who had been "born with his hands on a wheel," soon settled down, though he regretted the skipper's murderous habits. These were further exhibited at the cost of a French merchantman: down she went, her crew with her, all except a charming Frenchman called Raoul de Kérangal whom the captain, to the surprise of all, rescued from the clutches of a ruffian called Red Lear and to whom he insisted upon offering what hospitality the *Moonraker* afforded.

At this point the narrative changes its character. The pirate ship puts in at a port in the island of San Domingo and its crew fight manfully on the side of Toussaint l'Ouverture. There follows a long account of this hero's efforts to procure freedom for the natives. Tired of philanthropy the *Moonraker* sails away to undertake the proper business of pirate ships, that is, to discover treasure on a neighbouring island. Jacky remains behind, satisfying his ultimately humane and unpiratical instincts by bringing aid to the wounded of both sides amid a hail of bullets. At last, taking two ladies with him, he returns to the *Moonraker*, which has discovered a few pieces of eight. The ladies are coldly received. Raoul, who has been aboard the whole time, seems uneasy. The sailors, discouraged by the paucity of their find, murmur. Then the story, which has been by turns yarn, narrative and historical disquisition, takes wing and in a really splendid scene Captain Lovel reveals the truth at which previous incidents had darkly hinted. He is a woman. Alas! The rest of the ship's company, male and female, receive this disclosure with interest but without enthusiasm. As a buccaneer Sophy Lovel was a success; as a woman, a miserable failure. The crew now mutinying in good earnest, the captain resumes command and "learns" them, in true pirate fashion, not to be insubordinate. 'Moonraker' is a curious little story, often admirable in execution, but wanting in design. The rising in San Domingo and the progress of the *Moonraker*

are two separate stories, and though they meet they never really touch. Only in the scene of the captain's transformation does Miss Jesse show her true quality. She imagines romantic circumstances but the spirit of romance escapes her.

Mr. Priestley, however, though the materials of his novel might have been intended for farce, captures romance and holds it. Adam Stewart is a man of twenty-four, setting out on a holiday. Not a very sanguine holiday-maker; the glory and the gleam, he feels, are fading out of life; his power of enjoyment is weakening, he is growing staid. From this torpor of the sensibilities he is roused by the strange appearance and behaviour of his travelling-companions. Who is the man with the bagful of beards and moustaches? Why does the plain-clothes detective take so much interest in his carriage? This question at least is soon answered. His arrival in Derbyshire is followed immediately by his arrest; his arrest, as inexplicably and almost as rapidly, by his rescue at the hands of two young ladies. But they are mistaken; Lady Baddeley-Fragge's house-party, where he soon finds himself, is mistaken; for though his name is Stewart he is not the Stewart whom they, conspirators all, Companions of the Rose as they style themselves, are eagerly awaiting. The exiled dynasty will never be restored in his person. But they good-naturedly admit him to their company, a company whose members often distil themselves into humours, only to re-create themselves in flesh and blood. There is a great deal of incident. Adam has three love-affairs; gets lost, wet through, imprisoned. Policemen lurk behind laurel bushes. An almost fabulous Madeira is discovered in a country inn. The Baron, whose exact position in the plot nobody understands, holds forth amusingly about everybody and everything. And, subtly setting all the characters in relation and perspective, blending with and enhancing the romantic effect of the book, is the sense of full summer, lying rich and heavy over the hills and valleys of the Peak. How Mr. Priestley manages to secure this happy effect of unreality it is hard to see. Almost always the spells by which he conjures it are of the least hopeful kind; he refers continually to homely concrete familiar objects: pipes, beer, sandwiches, railway trains, motor-cars. When Adam gets wet through he is recommended by his hostess to take a hot bath and go to bed. The small claims of the flesh, which romanticists in general pass over, Mr. Priestley never ignores. The casket in which the secret of the conspiracy should have been enshrouded turns out to be an attaché case containing a half-bottle of Chambertin. Sense predominates over sensibility. At times one is a little disappointed by the prevalence of the prosaic; are not these dull, sub-lunar lovers, compared with Flora Macdonald? Would the Young Pretender's followers have thought twice about a wetting or a dinner postponed? But Mr. Priestley is right. He has created, with an amazing economy of means, an art that never declares itself, this strange medium in which all the manifestations of the modern world, at their most intractable, their most uncompromising, can meet and contribute to romance; a medium in which abstract incompatibilities, illusion and disillusion, irony and enthusiasm, seem to lose the sharpness of their difference. When the enchanted air wears thin, the narrative moves with a somewhat pedestrian gait; the lines themselves sometimes seem inadequate to what is between the lines. But how few modern writers make their meaning fill up, much less overflow, the written word! Mr. Priestley has the power of evocation in an unusual degree.

In 'Hallowmead Limited' Mr. Vernon Rendall takes for his theme the power of publicity, the power of the newspapers, especially the illustrated newspapers: the "photocracy" as he happily calls it. A syndicate discovers in Charles, a Soho waiter of

French extraction, the claimant to an ancient peerage. He disappears and, after a decent interval, is established as Lord Hallowmere; tastes, interests, recreations, anything that will make a newspaper paragraph, are found for him and fathered upon him. Round about this central theme are woven plots and counter-plots. Mr. Rendall excels in bright racy dialogue, although he sometimes allows his fluency to get the better of him. His satire does not go very deep, nor does he intend it should; it plays irresponsibly and charmingly round Big Business-men, penniless adventurers and "leaders of society" like Lady Clandon and (what a good name!) Lady Dot Pink. 'Hallowmead Limited' is an exuberant, entertaining novel.

OTHER NOVELS

Morals for Matilda. By Peter Blundell. The Bodley Head. 7s. 6d.

It is a relief to find the Far East treated familiarly by a novelist: slapped, as it were, on the back. The Casuarina tree, for instance, which Mr. Somerset Maugham, hardened tropicist though he is, mentions with bated breath, Mr. Blundell refers to quite casually, much as we might speak of an oak. The practice or vice of "mammi-palavering" which many moralists have wept over and which provides the dark background to most stories of the tropics, has no terrors for Mr. Blundell, scarcely commands his respect. Count Van der Puffner, for instance, had "a previous black wife and five dusky daughters."

Poor beautiful Dutch Lina, who had married the Count (as she thought: he was actually a bigamist as well as a mammi-palaverer) by proxy, did not know what she was in for when she went out to join him. To save her from her fate is the business of the hero, Mr. Winans, and indeed of nearly all the characters; and they all want to rescue her by the same means, that is by marrying her themselves. Mr. Blundell gets a great deal of fun out of all this. His humour is always on the watch for an opportunity, but it is repressible, and one does not tire of it.

The Big Four. By Agatha Christie. Collins. 7s. 6d.

Admirers of that excellent novel, 'The Mysterious Affair at Styles,' will be disappointed by Mrs. Christie's latest essay in detective fiction. 'The Big Four' are four master criminals, three men and a woman, four Professor Moriartys. Their strategy is grandiose but vague; to compel aeroplanes to make forced landings, to promote submarine accidents, and to isolate China, seem to be a few of them. Their tactics are indiscriminate murder. Poirot and his friend Hastings pursue them hither and thither, and are always being gagged, bound and blown up. Finally, the Big Four are run to earth in a mountain which they have mined, but which Poirot has circumscribed by a cordon. There is incident on every page, but of so confused a character one can hardly follow it. The laws of probability are so often suspended, in the interests of both parties, there are so many coincidences, that the abnormal becomes the normal. As a detective-story 'The Big Four' is a failure. It has some merits as a "shocker"; but Sir Arthur Conan Doyle has a prior claim to many of its best ideas.

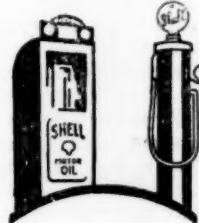
The Green Rope. By J. S. Fletcher. Herbert Jenkins. 7s. 6d.

Mr. Fletcher's mystery-stories would be excellent if only he could provide them with a satisfactory conclusion. He is adept at accumulating clues; each chapter has a telling little climax all its own. He can make us suspect everyone and yet no one. He has a respect for probability. (Though why Superin-

tendent Hanson neglected to examine all the contents of Miss Gilkison's handbag until the case was several days old, we cannot conceive.) The rapidity of his narrative is exemplary; he wastes the time of a great many people, fetching them from Inverness and compelling them to cable from Canada, but he never wastes ours. In the detection of crime he is a general practitioner, conversant with all methods, exploiting no fancy tricks. He has the interests of justice at heart; his detectives, if they recognized the criminal on the first page would certainly arrest him, at whatever cost to the story, whereas many others, we feel, would wantonly leave him at large for three hundred pages. But Mr. Fletcher lacks the finesse necessary to give his stories the *dénouement* they deserve.

Desperate Dilemmas. By M. P. Willcocks. Hutchinson. 7s. 6d.

In the four groups of short stories contained in this volume Miss Willcocks attempts to present the spirit of each of the places in which, apparently, they were written. "In Brittany the fancy is moved by one spirit and in Cornwall by another. Neither does Paris speak like London to anyone who is sensitive to the spirit which dwells in places and expresses itself through streets and houses as well as in the lines of men's features, the shapes of their heads, and the tones of their voices." The old gods persist still in Brittany, and Nature is a vital force. Paris, above all cities, is artificial; even lives there "are like 'things made,' with the pressure of the workman's thumb on them." London has its essence in ceaseless endeavour; always behind its "grinding of matter on matter" is "the whirling of the spirit of Life." Cornwall is strangest of all; the gods have departed, but they are not forgotten. "All the past is here, yet gone." These effects are conveyed with unequal results. The country stories are the more successful, for in them the sense of atmosphere seems more fundamental; life is simpler there, and comedy and tragedy drive deeper. But throughout there is an unexciting evenness of manner, a literary competence combined with an absence of true vitality which produces an air of feminine sentimentality, or even of triviality, surprising in the author of 'Between the Old World and the New.' 'Delicate Dilemmas'—a dilemma can be *too* delicate—is interesting enough, but we prefer Miss Willcocks's critical work.



To get you off quickly
these cold mornings
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THE QUICK-STARTING PAIR

THE CONNOISSEUR

WALNUT-WOOD FURNITURE

THE use of walnut-wood in England may be said to mark the transition from mere joinery to fine cabinet-making. From the latter part of Charles II's reign to the end of Queen Anne's all the best furniture was made of this wood or veneered with it. Earlier and rougher examples of walnut are to be found, but they are comparatively rare, though by far the finest specimen of all that I have seen is the Elizabethan sideboard in the National Collection. This superb specimen is of a very rich dark colour, and is to be found in a room panelled with old oak taken from a house near Exeter. Walnut-wood was, of course, in general use in France and Italy long before this.

Walnut trees were first grown in England in the sixteenth century. The wood lends itself to finer and more intricate carving than does oak, and it takes a glossy and exquisite polish. Its colour and grain vary enormously, from a rich, light, almost yellow brown in which virtually no grain is palpable, to a boldly patterned grain in which deep black streaks appear. This last is characteristic of Italian wood. At first in England walnut was used chiefly in the solid, not only for chairs, but for tables and chests. Later, this method was seen to be unsuitable as well as extravagant.

* * *

Nowadays the word "veneer" is largely used as a term of contempt, and was so used certainly before the days of Mr. Veneering. Its original use was not to hide inferior work but to give a beautiful appearance to furniture more suitably constructed of tougher wood. Moreover, by cutting walnut into thin strips to be glued on to carcasses of oak or pine the patterned grain could be repeated symmetrically. For certain effects, such as burr-walnut, the roots were cut up into veneer, while "oyster"-pattern is arrived at by cutting the smaller branches slantwise. It should be noted, however, that much fine "oyster"-pattern is of laburnum wood and not walnut at all.

* * *

From about 1660 to 1700 fine walnut-wood chairs were made with backs and seats of split cane-work, or upholstered with rich material, usually velvet. These are generally tall-backed and somewhat flimsy. Those associated with Charles II's reign were more elaborately carved. Later, especially in Queen Anne's time, solid comfort combined with sedate elegance distinguished chairs and settees, the main characteristics of this period being the cabriole legs, simple fiddle-shaped splats, the frequent use of carved escarp shells, and ball and claw feet. The ground of the elaborate marqueterie of the end of the seventeenth century was usually walnut-wood, but the most beautiful effect was obtained by simplicity. By about 1700 superficial decoration was less admired and the ornamental quality of the actual design was more pronounced; we should be careful, however, not to be too definite in assigning any decorative tendency to a particular reign. They were made for the earliest age of domestic comfort in this country, so that there is good and practical reason for their appeal to current fashion. Unlike the rougher earlier oak, however beautiful it may be, walnut-wood furniture is just as suitable for a town house as for a country one.

* * *

The more elaborate chairs and small tables in William and Mary's time were made with spirally turned legs and X-stretches, the conjunction of which

was frequently adorned with a turned ornament. An alternative treatment of the leg was a turned and inverted cup at the knee. Walnut-wood is seen at its best in the larger pieces of furniture such as chests of drawers, and of these, for people whose taste demands a strict simplicity, the very plain kind consisting of three, or occasionally two, drawers on a stand is an admirable combination of use and ornament. This type of chest is undecorated except for the drop-handles of brass, but the mellowed grey-brown of the polished wood "mixes" well with any reasonable colour scheme. Tallboys and bureaux, quite plain, or with simply carved detail, are obtainable from time to time in the sale-rooms.

* * *

Walnut-wood does not lend itself to commercial or commonplace forgery. There is, of course, plenty of spurious walnut furniture on the market, but if it is to deceive anyone of taste and discretion it must at least be a fine reproduction and almost as good as a specimen made at the implied period. Almost, but not quite.

BOHUN LYNCH

SHORTER NOTICES

Along the Rivieras of France and Italy. Written and Illustrated by Gordon Home. Dent. 7s. 6d.

THIS book is so good that one wishes it were better. Thanks are due, in the first place, to the author for sticking to the good old English word *Preface* and rejecting the ugly, superfluous, pseudo-antique Germanism *Foreword*, which should be relinquished to the pedants who write of Ælfred, Æward, Cnut, and the battle of Senlac, and to those others who say that we ought to speak of Gand, Wien, Firenze, and s'-Gravenhage, and not of Ghent, Vienna, Florence, and The Hague. But what is the use of getting a book beautifully illustrated, written as well as anyone can reasonably expect an artist to write a *Guide*, printing it in plain type on good paper, binding it attractively, and issuing it to the world "carefully revised," when the first glance at it reveals glaring errors such as our youngest office-boy could detect in a moment if given the opportunity.

For instance, on the very first page it is obvious that "and place" should be "any place," and that on the next but one "Reviera" should be "Riviera." (It is distressing, by the way, to hear this word pronounced as though there were but three syllables in it.) A junior clerk of average education might—perhaps—be trusted to point out that on p. 3 "has yet dreamed" should read "had yet dreamed," that on p. 5 the comma after "arid" should be deleted, and that on p. 7 "gravamen" is used in a sense unknown to dictionary-makers. Someone should surely have known that Dionysius is one of the names of Bacchus, and a little research would reveal the fact that "the commander of Phocaea" was called Dionysius (or -os). Finally, it is no secret that such phrases as "almost unique" and "so universally" are regarded as solecisms by scholars.

But perhaps we ought not to expect too much from publishers' readers and assistants. Some five-and-forty years ago a little book was translated for a Swiss house. They sent it to one of the principal London publishing firms for criticism, and it was returned with the remark that "it seemed all right, but the writer was under the impression that *fauna* meant flowers." If a few blemishes have been mentioned, it is only in order that the publishers may avoid them in the next edition of this really excellent book, which makes every reader long to see the places described at the first opportunity. A thin-paper edition, not much thicker than John Cobbett's interesting and eminently readable 'Tour in Italy,' would be welcome to those who have no room in their portmanteaux for bulky volumes.

The Hindu View of Life. By S. Radhakrishnan. Allen and Unwin. 5s.

Light from the East. By the Hon. P. Arunachalam. Allen and Unwin. 6s.

WESTERN minds are apt to be at the same time attracted and repelled by Indian philosophy: attracted by its wide tolerance in matters of belief, repelled by the rigid and hierarchical code of practice which it has set up in the course of centuries. To many in the West, Hinduism means little more than "a museum of beliefs, a medley of rites, or a mere map, a geographical expression." Yet again to others who believe with Edward Carpenter, as he writes in his introduction to Mr. Arunachalam's letters, that "the highest wisdom really consists at present in the ability to dismiss Thought [the italics are his] and to retain the mind in that state where it perceives events indeed, and is sensitive to them, but does not occupy itself at all

with the question of their Why and Wherefore"—to these there must ever be a strong attraction in Hinduism. In 'The Hindu View of Life'—a series of lectures delivered at Oxford last year—Mr. Radhakrishnan, who is King George V Professor of Philosophy at Calcutta University, eloquently yet concisely explains for European students the essential tenets of "Hinduism"; its religious beliefs, ethical code, and practical application in daily life. For all who desire to know something of the beliefs animating millions of people in India these lectures will prove an invaluable guide.

'Light from the East' consists of extracts of letters addressed by the late Hon. P. Arunachalam, a member of the Legislative Council of Ceylon, to Edward Carpenter on the subject of *Gnanam* (divine knowledge), and of four essays in which Mr. Carpenter airs his highly individualistic views on such subjects as 'The Endeavour to Control Desire'; 'Birth Control and Bisexuality,' etc. As a revelation of *nativité* on the part of an educated Tamil, the letters of Arunachalam are not without interest, and they certainly afford an insight into some of the more curious aspects of Indian religious thought.

The White Devil's Mate. By Lewis Stanton Palen. Lane. 7s. 6d.

THE hero of this book, a certain "Serge M.—," is a character so wildly fantastic, so theatrically named, that it would be difficult to believe in his existence if we did not remember that his adventures (like those of the Scarlet Pimpernel) took place in the middle of a revolution, and are well vouched for. The White Devil, as he was called, has already told us his own story of how he fought and tricked the Bolsheviks in Moscow, Orenburg, the Crimea and elsewhere. In this book we get a new version of the story—his wife's. Immediately, too, we get a new picture of the man—tense, highly strung, a typical product of civil war, craving for excitement and danger, as for meat and drink, to keep him alive. But we realize that the woman's part is the harder, after all. There is the continual sense of strain, waiting in a darkened room while shots ring out through the streets, and a dying man (perhaps her husband) lies groaning not far away. Then a tall building opposite is shelled, and breaks into flames, and looking out from her hotel window she suddenly recognizes that wild, solitary figure on the roof, hacking at the burning debris and shouting to the crowd below. In the midst of this nightmare life, her first baby was born. As she says, it was all so different from the European War. There everything was far away, and appeared in heroic colours. "But here, where everything happened right under one's eyes, where some five people had been killed just under my windows, and where Serge appeared with his *papakha* and coat shot through and with stains on his sword, all was terrible and ugly." But though she hated the whole business she proved herself, in point of courage and fortitude, a worthy companion for the White Devil. And Mr. Palen transcribes her story with all his usual dash.

Routes des Alpes. By Cecil B. Waterlow. With Maps and Illustrations. Iliffe. 7s. 6d.

HERE is a book that everyone who contemplates a visit to the Alps would be wise to put in his suit-case. The great French Alpine roads are coming to be widely known to motorists; and in this volume we learn of many delightful spots of the main trails. Once it was thought that a big touring car was essential to traverse these mountain ways, but the modern small car and even the motor bicycle are quite equal to the task. Mr. Waterlow has made a careful study of his terrain. His maps are excellent and the illustrations are an inducement to spend one's first holidays amid these white pearls. He starts from the Riviera, which is as it should be at this time of year, and leads us to the very heart of Switzerland with many an incursion into little-known valleys.

Many useful hints are given to motorists, and the best way to ensure comfort is consistently pointed out. It is an invaluable little volume for the Alpine motorist.

My Happy Family. By Cherry Kearton. Arrowsmith. 5s.

MR. KEARTON is familiar to most people as a writer and lecturer about wild animals. He is a past master in the art of making a good story out of their doings, and this little book contains an entertaining account of a chimpanzee, a fox terrier puppy, a mongoose and Peter, a small schoolboy. Peter came to spend his holidays with Mr. Kearton, and was very much disgusted to find that he was expected to associate with animals instead of with other children. He refused to make friends with Mary, the Chimpanzee, until her docility and intelligence won him over. Finally he became fast friends with the whole animal family. Mary, to whose exploits the book is mainly devoted, was the most lovable creature. She was occasionally headstrong and unmanageable, but she could never resist an appeal to her affections, and if her master simulated tears or distress, she would rush to comfort him. She understood everything that was said to her, ate and drank like a lady, and rowed herself about in a boat. The word "bed" could never be said in her presence or, so great was her dislike of being banished and deprived of human companionship, she would climb to the top of the highest tree she could find, or on to the roof of the house, in her attempts to avoid capture. The holidays ended with an escapade of this kind on the roof in which Peter sprained his ankle. But ever after, when he met Mary's master and was being amused with stories of the Jungle, he would say, "Tell me something about Mary."

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LITERARY NOTES

A n important book on health and housing, with a preface by Mr. Neville Chamberlain, is promised for publication in March by Messrs. Philip Allan. Its title is *The Housing of the Nation*, and the author is Colonel F. E. Fremantle. The same publishers are issuing a book on shooting by Lord Walsingham, entitled *Hit or Miss*.

Messrs. Elkin Mathews and Marrot have had the pleasant idea of reprinting Sara Coleridge's *Pretty Lessons in Verse for Good Children*. The book is due a fortnight hence.

The excellent 'Whitehall' series of Messrs. Putnam is being continued with volumes on the Board of Education by Sir Amherst Selby-Bigge, the Post Office by Sir Evelyn Murray, and the Admiralty by Sir Oswyn Murray.

Microbe Hunters, by Paul de Kruif, which is due very shortly from Messrs. Cape, deals with the work of researchers like Spallanzani and Pasteur and Ehrlich. The same publishers are issuing *Notes on Democracy* by the pungent Mr. Mencken.

Messrs. Dent announce the second volume of the elaborate history of *Costume and Fashion* by Mr. Herbert Norris, a life of *The Princess des Ursins* by Miss Maud Cruttwell, *An Introduction to the Study of Blake* by Mr. Max Plowman, and *London* by Mr. G. H. Cunningham, a comprehensive work arranged in the form of an index of streets.

We understand that a forthcoming addition to the 'English Men of Letters' Series is likely to be a volume on John Donne.

Messrs. Benn are publishing the English edition of *The Dybbuk*, the mystical Jewish play which created a sensation in America.

The fourth volume of Mr. D. A. Wilson's remarkable biography of Carlyle is announced by Messrs. Kegan Paul, who hope to publish the sixth and last in 1929.

THIS WEEK'S BOOKS

HISTORY AND BIOGRAPHY

- THE LIFE OF ST. PAUL. By F. J. Foakes-Jackson. Cape. 10s. 6d.
EVERYDAY LIFE IN THE OLD STONE AGE. Written and illustrated by Marjorie and C. H. B. Quennell. Batsford. 5s.
LIFE IN REGENCY AND EARLY VICTORIAN TIMES. By E. Beresford Chancellor. Batsford. 25s.
HISTORY OF THE SCIENCES IN GRECO-ROMAN ANTIQUITY. By Arnold Reymond. Translated by Ruth Guerry de Bray. Methuen. 7s. 6d.
DUNCAN DEWAR. A Student of St. Andrew's 100 years ago. His Accounts. With a Commentary by the late Sir Peter Redford Scott Lang. Glasgow. Jackson. Wylie. 7s. 6d.
WINDSOR CASTLE AND THE CHAPEL OF ST. GEORGE. By the Dean of Windsor; and THE MUSIC OF ST. GEORGE'S CHAPEL. By the Rev. E. H. Fellowes. Dent. 1s.
WESTMINSTER ABBEY. By Lawrence E. Tanner; and THE MUSIC OF WESTMINSTER. By the Rev. E. H. Fellowes. Dent. 1s.
BELLE OF BOHEMIA. The Memoirs of Belle Livingstone. Hamilton. 15s.
ANTIQUITIES OF INDIAN TIBET. Part II. THE CHRONICLES OF LADAKH AND MINOR CHRONICLES. By A. H. Francke. Edited with Foreword by F. W. Thomas. Calcutta, Superintendent Government Printing, India. 45s.

ESSAYS AND BELLES LETTRES

- THE ART IN PAINTING. By Albert C. Barnes. Cape. 25s.
THE RIGHT TO BE HAPPY. By Dora Russell. (The Hon. Mrs. Bertrand Russell.) Routledge. 5s.

THEOLOGY

THE JOHANNINE WRITINGS. A Study of the Apocalypse and the Fourth Gospel. By J. Estlin Carpenter. Constable. 30s.

TRAVEL

SOUTH AMERICA. An Economic and Regional Geography, with an historical chapter. By E. W. Shanahan. Methuen. 14s.

VERSE AND DRAMA

ONE MORE RIVER. A Modern Comedy in Three Acts. By Ashley Dukes. Benn. 3s. 6d. and 5s.

ISABEL'S ELEVEN. A Comedy in Four Acts. By H. F. Rubenstein. Benn. 3s. 6d. and 5s.

PERFECTLY SCANDALOUS, or "The Immorality Lady." By William Gerhardi. Benn. 3s. 6d.

FICTION

THE COTHERSTONES. By Mrs. Barré Goldie. Melrose. 7s. 6d.

SUNSET BRIDE. By Tickner Edwards. Hutchinson. 7s. 6d.

TABOO. By Wilbur Daniel Steele. Hutchinson. 7s. 6d.

THE LONG PATROL. By Albert M. Treynor. Hutchinson. 7s. 6d.

THE CASE OF BEVAN YORKE. By W. B. Maxwell. Benn. 7s. 6d.

THE TIME OF MAN. By Elizabeth Madox Roberts. Cape. 7s. 6d.

THE STARLING. By Doris Leslie. Hurst and Blackett. 7s. 6d.

BLIND CORNER. By Dornford Yates. Hodder and Stoughton. 7s. 6d.

THE SECRET FOOL. By Victor MacClure. Harrap. 7s. 6d.

THE PERFECT ROUND. By Herbert Adams. Methuen. 3s. 6d.

YOU CAN'T WIN. By Jack Black. Macmillan. 7s. 6d.

THE MISSES MALLETT. By E. H. Young. Cape. 7s. 6d.

THE WHITE SHIP. Estonian Tales. By Aino Kallas. Translated from the Finnish by Alex. Matson. (With a Foreword by John Galsworthy.) Cape (Travellers' Library). 3s. 6d.

THE MONSOON-BIRD. By W. Kobold Knight. Cassell. 7s. 6d.

THE SPLENDID RASCAL. By George Challis. Cassell. 7s. 6d.

THE QUARTERLIES

In the *Quarterly* Mr. Murray makes Mr. Stanley Unwin's book on 'The Truth about Publishing' the occasion for some wise and amusing remarks on the difficulties of publishers and the expectations of authors. Among other notable points discussed are the prevalence of flashy reminiscences and the frequent attempts to lure an author away from the publisher who has started him on the road to success. The Literary Agent has his uses, but he tends to reduce those personal relations between producer and writer for which the house of Murray has long been famous. In 'The Play's the Thing' Mr. E. Falkner writes of the decadence of the drama and commercial managers of inferior judgment. We must remember, however, that plays to-day have to recover from the wretched standard of the war as well as other handicaps. Miss F. M. Stawell on 'Greek Religion' develops the early Nature side of deities, and makes some interesting, if rather speculative, connexions between Greek and the Cretan script. Mr. H. G. Hutchinson gives an admirable view of Henry Chaplin, the typical English squire, and Sir George Aston in 'The Strength of England' recalls two first-rate books.

The *Edinburgh* provides a good deal of solid fare, the most attractive articles on history being 'The Antiquity of the English Village' by Mr. H. J. Randall, and Mr. Wyatt Tilby's survey of 'A Century of Suburbanization.' The worst of it is that facilities for travel only increase congestion at the centre. Signor Luigi Villari writes on Fascism as a strong supporter, and scouts the opposition as worthless. Colonel Pope-Hennessy considers 'Soldiers and Statesmen' in war-time, and deals faithfully with Mr. Lloyd George's methods, which remain for the astonishment of history. Mr. J. L. May is lively 'Concerning Translation' and its difficulties. It may be called, as he says, either easy or impossible. But he should not bring in FitzGerald's 'Omar,' a paraphrase which has little claim to be a rendering of a fixed original. Mr. A. D. Cotton has a good subject in 'The Index Kewensis and New Garden Plants,' including also the Edinburgh garden, which can grow things not well suited to Kew. Among these *Gentiana farrei* is not, we think, the most attractive of gifts from the Far East. Thence, however, come many delightful plants secured by recent indefatigable explorers. The Sino-Himalayan region has, we learn, produced close on 100 new *Primulas*, and the charming *Meconopsis* has been discovered with new shades of blue.

The *Print Collectors' Quarterly* for January announces that in 1927 and thereafter it will appear in the months of January, April, July and October. Mr. Harold Child, well known for his Shakespearean work, discusses 'Theatrical Portrait Prints,' which have ceased in this age of photography. The stock is, however, large and varied enough to offer good chances to the collector. But Mr. Child points out that the student of such prints cares more for the person portrayed than the artist, and so is apt to cherish some poor stuff. The excellent collector at the Garrick Club has produced some delightful mezzotints. The article is well illustrated. Mr. Campbell Dodgson is doing expert work on

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ECM/MELLOW

'Some Undescribed States of Goya's Etchings,' and Miss E. L. Cary has a 'Note' on Joseph Pennell. He did much to poetize the modern world of buildings, chimneys and smoke, but lacked occasionally the precision of the first-rate craftsman. Mr. Harold Wright deals briefly with the work of P. F. Gethin, who was killed in the war, and is now recognized as a real loss to art.

ACROSTICS

PUBLISHER'S PRIZE

For the Acrostic Competition there is a weekly prize:—A Book (selected by the competitor) reviewed in that issue of the SATURDAY REVIEW in which the problem was set, presented by the publisher.

RULES

1. The price of the book chosen must not exceed a guinea; it must be named by the solver when he sends his solution, and be published by a firm whose name appears on the list printed on the Competition Coupon.

2. *The coupon for the week must be enclosed.*

3. Envelopes must be marked "Competition," and addressed to the Acrostic Editor, SATURDAY REVIEW, 9 King Street, London, W.C.2.

Competitors not complying with these Rules will be disqualified.

Award of Prizes.—When solutions are of equal merit, the result will be decided by lot.

Under penalty of disqualification, competitors must intimate their choice of book when sending solutions, which must reach us not later than the Friday following the date of publication.

To avoid the same book being chosen twice, books mentioned in 'Literary Notes' (which, in many instances, are re-reviewed at length in a subsequent issue of the paper) are not eligible as prizes.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC No. 255

A BOOK BY DICKENS, AND ITS ILLUSTRATOR,
OF MANY A FUNNY PHIZ DELINEATOR.

1. Feeble we grow: is it the worm within?
2. No backbone have they underneath their skin.
3. Halve him whose household stuff a Jew cast forth.
4. "Its source?" The blubbery monsters of the North.
5. To Cantabs thus familiarly known.
6. He sets great store by—whom? Himself alone.
7. Produced by one, no master of his art.
8. Now of an ephah name me the tenth part.
9. Of flying squirrel 'tis the Indian name.
10. Reverse a lexicographer of fame.
11. Fled, in my age, Shame, Truth, and Faith, dismayed.
12. This takes their place, and men in slaughter wade.*

* See Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, Blk. 1.

Solution of Acrostic No. 253

S	haf	T ¹	Apollo defeated the celebrated piper Marsyas in
A	lep	H ²	a contest of skill, and was also famous as an
C	rat	E	archer.
K	imon	O ²	There are twenty-two letters in the Hebrew
B	unke	R ³	alphabet, and Aleph is the first. See Ps. cxix.
U	sku	B ³	The battle of Bunker Hill was fought in 1775,
T	abo	O	Lord North was Prime Minister from 1770 to
			1782.

ACROSTIC NO. 253.—The winner is Mr. Andrew Ken, 28 Bishopsgate, E.C., who has selected as his prize 'The History of the St. Leger Stakes,' by J. S. Fletcher, published by Hutchinson and reviewed in our columns on January 22, under the title 'Ghosts at Doncaster.' Ten other competitors chose this book, nineteen named 'My Fifty Years,' etc., etc.

ALSO CORRECT.—Baldersby, A. de V. Blathwayt, C. H. Burton, Carlton, J. Chambers, A. R. N. Cowper-Coles, Doric, East Sheen, H. C. M., Jerboa, Kirkton, John Lennie, Madge, Margaret, Met, George W. Miller, N. O. Sellam, F. R. Pryor, Hon. R. G. Talbot, Trike, Twyford, Varach, Yendu.

ONE LIGHT WRONG.—Ape, Ruth Carrick, Dodeka, Farsdon, Gay, Jop, Lilian, Oakapple, F. M. Petty, Quis, Stucco, C. J. Warden, Yewden.

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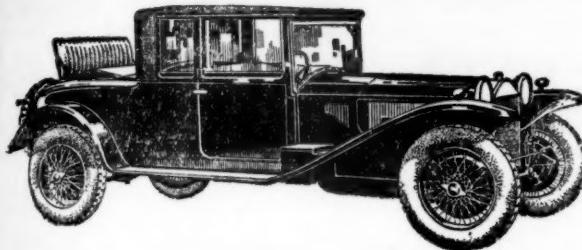
MOTORING

SPORTS TOURING CARS

By H. THORNTON RUTTER

ATTENTION was drawn recently to the efforts of certain well-known motor racing drivers to create new world's records for the kilometre and the mile. Little notice, on the contrary, appears to have been taken of the performance of cars of the Le Mans racing "sports" touring type which have taken part in long twenty-four hour contests over road courses. Why greater publicity is given to a sprint race of a mile or a kilometre than to events in which the cars actually travel at about 100 miles an hour for twenty-four hours, puzzles the motorist. The long distance run is a far better performance—although less spectacular than a short burst of speed at nearly twice that rate—in the eyes of the owner-driver and purchaser of automobiles as it demonstrates a trustworthiness at high speed that gives confidence in the product for ordinary use. In fact the sports types of racing touring cars are usually taken into ordinary service by their owners when they are not racing in competitions. A notable example of the usefulness of these machines is the "three-litre" Bentley that always put up a wonderful performance in the Le Mans annual races for sports touring cars. Dr. J. D. Benjafield uses his Bentley for his ordinary visiting rounds, although it ran in that race with distinction. He altered the car for town use only to the extent of fitting a glass screen, a lower hood, removing the supplementary oil tank (used in the race) and adopting a less fierce setting of the carburettor. Another of these Le Mans racing Bentleys in ordinary use is owned and driven by Lieut. Glen Kidston, R.N., while one of the Le Mans "three litre" Sunbeam racers is doing its duty daily with its saloon body. I do not wish to imply that the racing car pure and simple is not useful in providing data for the general improvement of motor carriages, their accessories, and equipment, but there seems to be a lack of all sense of proportion in the attention drawn to one form of speed performance as compared to that given to the other.

Visitors to the Brooklands Automobile Racing Club's meetings at Weybridge often complain that motor racing is dull compared to horse racing. To quote the words of a racing amateur driver, Mr. S. C. H. Davis, "in actual fact a racing car properly handled, no matter at what speed or in what circumstances, will not give the inexperienced spectator—that is the average member of the public—knowing nothing of motoring, any thrills, save perhaps a few caused by speed to which he will become accustomed rapidly. Further if a driver succeeds in making racing really thrilling he is not a good driver." Experienced motorists will heartily endorse these remarks. Wild skidding at corners, cars charging sand banks, crashes and collisions are the thrills spectators are expecting, and they are disappointed because they occur but seldom. The truth of the matter is that motor-car racing can only be enjoyed by those who understand what they are looking at. Now skill averts thrills and risks of spectacular driving. The French crowds are infinitely more sympathetic and more intelligent in this respect than those in England. That is the reason for a greater attendance of the public at the French Grand Prix motor races and at Le Mans for the Rudge-Whitworth cups and similar events, than England can ever collect for the British Grand Prix or any other motor-car race meeting.



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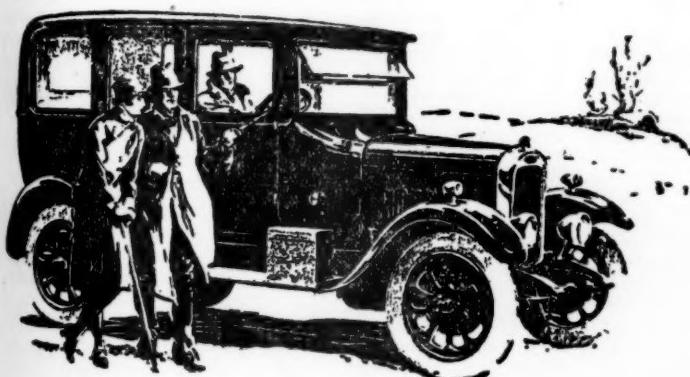
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C.C. 26

CITY NOTES

Lombard Street, Thursday

M R. MCKENNA'S speech at the Midland Bank meeting last week would have created something of a sensation had it dealt with a subject with which the public are more conversant. As it is, it is likely to cause considerable controversy. Its results may prove both helpful and harmful. In opening his speech, Mr. McKenna stated that he proposed to give some answer to the question why for the past six years we have suffered from trade depression and unemployment of almost unparalleled severity, while America has enjoyed great and increasing prosperity. A difficult theme, but one on which the views of a speaker of Mr. McKenna's reputation was bound to prove of absorbing interest. These views were that the depression in this country was attributable to our monetary policy, which, he explained, was entirely in the hands of the Bank of England. Without entering into any discussion as to the points raised, I would suggest that the result of such an opinion from not merely a great banker, but also an ex-Chancellor of the Exchequer, may prove harmful. It is bound to be put forward as an argument by those who would reform the country by breaking up all its existing institutions. The occasion, with its attendant publicity, was an unfortunate one for criticism of this nature. Mr. McKenna's suggestion that the existing system should be carefully reconsidered is one with which no fault can be found. No matter how perfect a system may be, its analysis and re-analysis can only prove helpful, and undoubtedly Mr. McKenna's remarks will prove useful in this direction. As for the basis of his theory, here considerable controversy will arise. Mr. Goodenough's views expressed at the recent meeting of Barclay's Bank, with which I think I am correct in saying the majority of the Banking world agrees, are diametrically opposed to Mr. McKenna's. On the other hand, Mr. McKenna was expressing the opinion of many students of this very important subject. Mr. McKenna would have the Bank of England placed on the same reserve basis as the Federal Reserve Banks of America. He presumably does not attribute American prosperity to the fact that the war enabled her to change from a debtor to a creditor country, or to the vast internal market she has for her own goods. Her prosperity, he contends, is due to the elasticity of her credit system, while the depression and unemployment in this country he attributes to the rigidity of our monetary system.

FOREIGN LOANS

The demand for foreign loans showing a high yield of interest continues unabated, and it is growing increasingly difficult for the market to supply would-be buyers. The Bulgarian Loan, which was issued a few days before Christmas, and has been standing at an undignified discount, has participated of late in the general demand, and is now at a premium. The City of Budapest International issue has this week been changing hands at over 64, which, by the way, is more than double the price at which it stood when originally recommended here in the summer of 1925. Rumanian 4% Consols have also sprung into demand, a demand based on the fact that under present conditions a Roumanian Government issue should be on an 8% basis. The older issues brought out by the League of Nations are all standing at prices gratifying to those who originally subscribed, and there is no inducement for holders to sell as it is almost impossible to find substitutes for investment.

SNIA VISCOSA DEBENTURES

Apropos of the above remarks, attention is drawn to the 7½% debenture of the Snia Viscosa Company. These debentures were offered last December at 93% and are now obtainable at about 98. The recent arrangement that the Company has entered into with Courtaulds enormously enhances the value of these debentures, and in these circumstances, despite the premium, they appear a good foreign investment for mixing purposes.

OILS

The oil share market continues to display considerable activity. Anglo-Persians have again been well to the fore, while V.O.C. have attracted considerable attention. It may be remembered that the V.O.C. Company issued a bonus to their shareholders in the form of rights to apply for one new share at 20s. for every two shares held. It had been imagined that when these rights were distributed they would be procurable in the market at a comparatively lower price than the existing shares. The fallacy of this was shown on Monday, when dealings started, and both the shares and the rights rose sharply. The V.O.C. Company possesses great possibilities and I hazard the opinion that those who lock these shares away for a period of twelve months will find they have appreciated considerably in price in the interval. These remarks are also applicable to Lobitos, which I favour.

HOME RAILS

Home Rails have been dull, the declaration of the dividend on the Metropolitan Railway Ordinary stock having proved disappointing to the market. If a Company such as the Metropolitan, whose revenue is mainly derived from suburban passenger traffic shows a disappointing result for 1926, what consternation the results of the main lines will cause it is hard to say. These results will be issued in the course of the next week or so, and once they are out of the way the home railway market should go better, particularly in view of the hopes of a trade revival, which appear to be prevalent.

SAN FRANCISCO MINES

The recently issued report of the San Francisco Mines proved satisfactory. These shares have been slightly depressed of late, owing to the disturbing nature of the news from Mexico. Now that the position there looks clearer, these shares should quickly appreciate in price. I have always favoured this mine, and I consider its shares at the present level a particularly attractive mining investment.

BREWERIES

The shares of Huggins and Company had a sharp fall early in the week on official denial of the rumour that the Company was interested in amalgamation negotiations. The position of the Company, however, is extraordinarily good, and I feel that those who invest in Huggins shares will find they have made an intelligent investment before many months have passed. Other brewery shares which I favour are those of Hoare's.

RIBON VALLEY

I understand that dealings will start next week in the 5s. shares of Ribon Valley Nigeria Tinfields. This Company has proved its worth in the past by producing tin on a dividend-earning basis, and the introduction of its shares on the Stock Exchange will probably cause considerable interest. At the moment of writing the actual price at which dealings will start is not known, but if procurable at a reasonable premium they should prove a remunerative mining speculation.

TAURUS

Company Meeting

Bank of Liverpool & Martins LIMITED.

NINETY-SIXTH ANNUAL MEETING

The NINETY-SIXTH ANNUAL MEETING of Shareholders of the BANK OF LIVERPOOL & MARTINS LIMITED was held at Liverpool on Friday, January 28. The Chairman, Mr. R. M. Holland-Martin, C.B., presided over a large attendance.

The Chairman, in moving the adoption of the Report and Accounts, referred to the retirement at the end of last summer of Mr. T. Fisher Caldwell, who succeeded Sir James Hope Simpson three years ago. The Board wished to place on record their appreciation of the many services he rendered the Bank during the twenty-three years he was connected with it.

Mr. A. F. Shawyer had been appointed General Manager in his place, an appointment made by the Board with great confidence, for not only had Mr. Shawyer had long banking experience, first with the Cumberland Union Banking Co., and afterwards with the Bank of England, the Lincoln & Lindsey Bank, and the Midland Bank, but in the two and a half years since he joined the Bank of Liverpool the Directors and the customers had learnt how clear was his insight into the many problems that confront a banker.

Mr. J. M. Furniss, District General Manager of the North Eastern District, had been appointed Assistant General Manager of the Bank, and had been succeeded in the North Eastern District by Mr. J. Kendrick.

Mr. H. Mancknols Walton, for five years a member of the Manchester Board, had been elected to the General Board.

SATISFACTORY YEAR'S TRADING.

Reviewing the balance sheet, the Chairman said after making provision for all bad and doubtful debts, the net profit for the year amounted to £542,730, a decrease of £29,586 from 1925, but £12,288 more than 1924. £138,356 was brought forward, and the Board proposed to allocate £150,000 to Reserve, bringing it up to £2,000,000 (a considerable figure he hoped to see increased until it was at least equal to the paid-up capital); to write £50,000 off Bank Premises Account, which would then stand at the very conservative figure of £1,555,943, having regard to their very valuable properties; and to pay a half-yearly dividend of 8 per cent., making 16 per cent. for the year, a rate maintained since 1919.

Loans and advances, which decreased by some two million pounds the previous year, had risen by £1,289,692, as was only to be expected from the condition of trade in the areas in which the Bank was interested. This was naturally reflected in the proportions of cash in hand and money at short notice, which was 33.2 per cent., as against 24.13 per cent.

BANKS AND BUSINESS.

"Once more then we have done our share," the Chairman continued, "in helping to finance the trade and industry of the country. In doing so, we have, in common with the other banks, fulfilled our proper function, and I submit, with due respect to our critics, that the banks should keep strictly within their province. I imagine most business men will agree with me that a trade would prefer to solve its own problems without outside interference. English banks have always set their faces against becoming partners in the businesses of their customers and prefer to deal with their customers as individuals rather than to deal with trades as a whole. Even supposing one trade to be particularly distressed at a given moment, yet the members of that trade all differ from each other in their financial conditions and need separate sympathetic treatment."

The history of the London Money Market in 1926 showed that the Bank of England had exercised its control of the market both wisely and well. There were great hopes in the early part of the year the Bank Rate would fall below the 5 per cent. to which it had been raised in the previous December, but these were dashed by the general strike and the coal dispute.

HOME TRADES REVIEWED.

Home trades naturally had been affected adversely by the strike. Farmers again had had a disappointing year. Those who depended on stock had suffered severely from the fall in

prices, the pig trade being the one bright spot. More beet factories had come into work, and aided by the subsidy, had helped farmers to grow a profitable crop. Despite the efforts of the National Farmer's Union, the milk trade had been unprofitable, milk production during the past few years having overrun consumption.

There had been a steady and fairly profitable trade in wheat and prices seemed to have come down to a fairly safe level, owing to the good crops harvested in most exporting countries. The year's imports were slightly larger than in 1925. The year had been a bad one for the milling trade, which suffered from excessive competition, the country being still over-milled, and prospects were not too bright.

COAL SET-BACK.

The incalculable harm done to the nation by the coal dispute had not only involved the miners and others in the loss of over £200,000,000 in wages and had driven many of them into debt that would take years to pay off, besides the exhaustion of their Trade Union funds, but mineowners had suffered equally in the deterioration of mines and plants and the loss of profits. Any profits made in 1927 would have to be spent in great measure in repairing the harm done. Recovery from the effects of the strike would take months, and be only attained by good-will on all sides and hard work on the part of everyone.

The expectation of a gradual revival of the iron and steel trade ended with the coal strike, and the British output of pig iron was lower than it had been since 1850, and of steel the lowest for thirty years. The outlook for the future, however, was promising. Many furnaces had been restarted, and in view of the shortage of pig iron, production should go ahead if only coal costs could be kept low. With the revival of industry there was a rising demand for constructional steel and shipbuilding material.

Although shipbuilding had been at a standstill throughout the country, for the coming year the outlook was good. There was a considerable amount of work on order, and some of the closed yards would probably be re-opened shortly.

The outlook in shipping was brighter, as it was thought freights had now reached the bottom, and that a gradual increase would shortly result.

In the engineering trade the year had been a bad one, but it was hoped that with the revival of work in the shipbuilding yards there would be a general demand for the new and improved machines necessary if bigger output and more economical working were to be obtained.

COTTON.

The difficulties of the cotton trade had been great. Throughout the year there had been a steady fall in the prices of raw material and textiles, which had resulted in buyers holding off. The state of affairs in China had taken away one of our best markets, and in addition foreign competition in the coarser qualities of goods had grown more severe. The large American cotton crop, with its consequent effect on values, caused the American section of the spinning trade to suffer more than any other.

Prospects for 1927 were fair. Stocks were not heavy and should be rapidly absorbed, while with prices at their present low level all fears of depreciation should be at an end, and with any indication of an upward tendency substantial orders should be placed.

Britain still held pride of place in the world's cotton production; and in the future, despite keener competition from our rivals, we ought, if only we could maintain our efficiency, to continue to hold our ground, more particularly for high class goods.

WOOL.

In the woollen trade mills had run short time or even stood still owing to the importation of French manufactured goods

at prices with which our manufacturers could not compete. The appreciation of the French exchange had tended to eliminate that competition, and with freedom from industrial trouble at home it was hoped trade would improve.

CALL FOR INDUSTRIAL PEACE.

Reiterating his statement of a year ago that industrial peace is the greatest need of the nation, the Chairman said the stern facts of last year's conflict and the appalling figures of unemployment had taught them, as perhaps nothing else ever would, how dependent each trade, each individual, was on other trades and other individuals.

"We have seen that if the coal mines cease to work," he said, "the blast furnaces and the steel works have also to close down, and in their wake all heavy engineering work and shipbuilding is crippled. So, too, if the textile trades work short hours the light engineers' shops are affected. Trade cannot really prosper unless all are doing well. It is useless for the cry of higher wages to be raised unless the Nation as a whole is at work and is earning profits."

"By last year's strife we have added to the national burdens and have made our goods more expensive. Our increasing expenditure and diminishing revenue will not allow the remission of taxation which is so essential for the relief of the burdens of industry. The serious increases in rates further handicap our manufacturers. Our trade welfare depends on our being able to produce well and cheaply, but industries cannot instal the machinery needed for greater efficiency if there are no profits left, after paying the first charge of wages, to remunerate the capital required to run the works."

"Let us then, as our resolution for 1927, determine to do all that we can to add to the efficiency of our respective businesses and to cut down our expenses, that we may produce the best goods in the best and cheapest way, in order to retain our place in those markets that we have been so near losing this year; and, while working together in partnership to this common end, let capital bear in mind the rightful needs of labour and give labour over and above adequate wages that should allow of a constantly improving standard of living, some chance of participation, by investment, in the profits that remain after capital has received its due return. Nothing interests a man so much in his work as to realize that if the business in which he is employed is doing well he, too, will benefit; nothing benefits trade so much as the welfare of all."

The Report and Accounts were unanimously adopted.

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